

# RISALO OF SHAH ABDULLATIF (Selections)

Translated in verse by ELSA KAZI





## ABOUT THIS BOOK

"Nowhere does the sacred fire of poetry and music burn with such a pure flame as it does in the Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif..... There is hardly a facet of man's deeper understanding of his Destiny and his Role on Earth which he has not revealed in all its majestic splendour in his poetry. He opens our inner eye to catch the glimpse of the Reality and makes it see through the world of appearance that which is its essence, its substance, its abiding truth. But for a person who does not know Sindhi language and is not aware of the grandeur and loftiness of the style with which Latif depicts his mystical insights and intuitions, it requires a great deal of sympathy to get to the depth of the meaning and significance of his poetry.

"In rendering into English the verses in Sindhi of Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif. Mrs. Elsa Kazi has produced a work of the highest importance which is likely to be declared as one of the masterpieces of our time. The task of presenting in English language the poetic vision and truth enshrined in the verses of Shah Abdul Latif, who has been acknowledged to be the greatest poet of Sindhi language, is by no means an easy undertaking. But despite the usual difficulty of *translating* poetry in another language, Mrs. Elsa Kazi has succeeded remarkably well. A great deal of poetic insight and sympathy we associate with the approach of Shah Abdul Latif to the problem of man's place in the scheme of things, of his spiritual aspiration and its fulfilment, would be found represented in the English version in a style which is suited to the theme of Latif's song and, what is more, embodied in a structural form which is very much akin to the original."





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SINDHI ADABI BOARD HYDERABAD

RISALO  
OF  
SHAH ABDULL LATIF  
(Selections)  
Translated in verse by ELSA KAZI





Abdur Aziz Chaudhary  
Oct. '87

Salam Usman,

Maybe it's a good time  
to read this again.

Faikis  
Dec 2018



RISALO OF SHAH ABDUL LATIF  
(SELECTIONS)

على حفلة قدوم القرن الخامس عشر الهجري





Elsa Bertrude Loesch & I. I. Kazi  
 Married 1910  
 Lived in London 1911 to 1919  
 served in Kharipur as Judge  
 stayed in London upto 1951.  
 joined S. B. University - 1951

# RISALO OF SHAH ABDUL LATIF

(SELECTIONS)

TRANSLATED IN VERSE

BY

ELSA KAZI

(Elsa Gertrude Loesch)  
 born: 3rd Oct 1889, died '1967

—

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

A. K. BROHI

&

AN APPENDIX

BY

ALLAN I. I. KAZI



Translator's  
 notes as  
 an aid especially  
 to a Western  
 Reader  
 (The meanings of the  
 names of Surs)

SINDHI ADABI BOARD  
 HYDERABAD, SIND.  
 PAKISTAN.

1981

“ When will I be from mansions free and reach my 'Maru' Sweet ? ”



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## FOREWORD

It is a matter of personal happiness to me that the English rendering in verse by my blessed spiritual mother, Mrs. Elsa Kazi, of the selected poetry of Shah Abdul Latif is being re-issued as a third edition under the aegis of 15th Centenary Hijra Books Publication Programme.

This book is probably the only book in English which gives some idea of the power, majesty and the artistic appeal of the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif, the famous Sufi saint of 18th Century Sind. The value of the book is somewhat heightened by reason of the fact that included in it is an excursus written by me in the nature of extended discussion on the character, scope and significance of the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif. His place amongst the major poets of the world has also been set forth in an impressive manner: this appreciation of the comparative worth of the poetry of Latif has been offered by no less a person than Father Allama I. I. Kazi, one of the most outstanding of sages, savants and mentors of our time. Thus, in effect, in this book we have the superb illustration of the greatest of the Sindhi poets being commented upon by the greatest of philosophers of Sindh. Both are in a significant sense spiritual offspring of higher religious consciousness, if only because what both have in common is the inspiration that they derive from the message of the last Prophet of Universal Religion. That message, as is well known, is contained in the revealed word of God, called the Quran, and the Traditions (Sunnah) that we ascribe to the Prophet of Islam touching and concerning what he said or did in his days in order to present Islam as a faith, as a supreme-doctrine, and as also, as a creative impulse in Human History. I have no doubt that discerning students of Higher poetry and universal religion would be interested in perusing this fascinating translation in English verse of the poetry of this remarkable Moslem saint of Sind.

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Poetry of Latif no doubt owes its original impulse from Quran but the language in which the poet has presented his song, in some strange way, is itself to be regarded as genuine expression of the soul of Sind. Sindhi Language which has grown by the interaction of four great classical languages of the East, viz: Sanskrit, Prakrit, Arabic and Persian has been rendered richer by the contribution which the poetry of Latif has made to it. Whole of Shah-jo-Risalo is an embodiment of the longing of human soul to return, as Wordsworth would put it, to "Heaven which is our Home above". Shah Abdul Latif is not so much a poet in the conventional sense of that word as a God-intoxicated man for whom all the choir and furniture of heaven and the earth proclaims the Glory of the Holy Spirit. The periodic changes we notice in the alternation of the day and the night and endless procession of pegeantry and show that we witness in the annual cycle of seasons as also in the reflection of Divine that a Sufi encounters in the texture of the soul-life of man, for the poet all these too are signs of God's Power and mercy and reflect His Beauty and Glory.

The Hijra Committee of Pakistan is honoured by the thought that it is publishing the present edition of Mrs. Elsa Kazi's remarkable rendering of verses of Shah Abdul Latif in English and hopes that its study by serious students of World-Poetry would be an stimulous to their aesthetic sensibility and a perennial source of enduring happiness.

A. K. BROHI  
CHAIRMAN  
NATIONAL HIJRA COMMITTEE  
ISLAMABAD

10th of Zil Haj 1402 A.H.  
28th of Sept. 1982 A.D.

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Elsa Kazi



SHAH ABDUL LATIF

Born : 1689 A.D., at *Halla Haveli*—a Hamlet in  
Hyderabad District of Sind.

Died : 1752 A.D., at *Bhit Shah*—a Settlement  
founded by the Poet, in  
Hyderabad District.



## INTRODUCTION

A. K. Brehi

1963

In rendering into English the verses in Sindhi of *Shah-jo-Risalo*, Mrs. Elsa Kazi has produced a work of the highest importance which, I dare say, is bound to arrest the attention of the literary world and is likely to be declared as one of the masterpieces of our time. The task of presenting in English language the poetic vision and truth enshrined in the verses of Shah Abdul Latif, who has been acknowledged to be the greatest poet of Sindhi language, is by no means an easy undertaking. But despite the usual difficulty of translating poetry in another language, our authoress has succeeded remarkably well. A great deal of poetic insight and sympathy we associate with the approach of Shah Abdul Latif to the problem of man's place in the scheme of things, of his spiritual aspiration and its fulfilment, would be found represented in the English version in a style which is suited to the theme of Latif's song and, what is more, embodied in a structural form which is very much akin to the original.

For the person who knows *Shah-jo-Risalo* in original, the rendering of it in English language by Mrs. Elsa Kazi would come as naturally to him as the very air that he breathes! He is sure to find in the translation the echo of the original. But such is the quality of the performance of our authoress that even for him, the English rendering is bound, in addition, to disclose further deeper insights into the meaning that animates the original verse. As for those who are not aware of the lofty eloquence of the original verse in which have been embalmed and treasured the flights of poetic fancy of the immortal Sindhi Bard, the present translation is bound to reveal a new dimension of poetic truth altogether. For such as these, the reading of the translation is bound to evoke an emotional response akin to the one Keats attempted to set forth in his famous sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer": they are bound to feel, as did the author of that poem who sang—

"Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken."

But how, one may well ask, has this miracle been performed? To begin with, as is well known, our authoress is, in her own right, a poet of outstanding merit and therefore pre-eminently qualified



to perform the task she had set out to accomplish. But to say that only a poet is needed for making poetry effectively available in another language, would hardly seem to be a complete answer to the question we have raised. Hence a few observations upon that subject may not be altogether irrelevant.

Nowhere does the sacred fire of poetry and music burn with such a pure flame as it does in the *Risalo* of Latif; for those who have read his poetry ever since their childhood, he has already become a part of their soul-life. And it is only too true to say of Latif's poetry that there is hardly a facet of man's deeper understanding of his Destiny and his Role on Earth which he has not revealed in all its majestic splendour in his poetry. He opens our inner eye to catch the glimpse of the Reality and makes it see through the world of appearance that which is its essence, its substance, its abiding truth. But for a person who does not know Sindhi language and is not aware of the grandeur and loftiness of the style with which Latif depicts his mystical insights and intuitions, it requires a great deal of sympathy to get to the depth of the meaning and significance of his poetry.

And how is it possible, one may as well ask, for a person like Mrs. Elsa Kazi, who does not even know Sindhi language, to be able to make available to us in English,—which also, by the way, is not her language, her mother-language being German—the original power and beauty of the poetry of Latif? The actual method adopted in capturing the soul of original verse was that her talented husband, Mr. I. I. Kazi, who in his own right is considered by all the Sindhi scholars as an authority on Latif, communicated to her the pith and substance of the meaning of the verses of Shah and she thereafter recreated the effect, not merely by representing in verse what had been communicated to her as a comment, but by embalming and treasuring it in a memorable form—a form which from the point of view of prosody is very much reminiscent of the original!

One has often come across in the history of literature phenomena which are comparable to the one we are examining: Romain Rolland, a French writer, has been able to recreate the message of Rama Krishna and Vivekananda in his well known biographical studies of these sages, although he never so much as met them in life or set his foot on the soil of Bengal where they lived, moved and had their being. Any one reading these biographies is bound to

be struck by the grip that Romain Rolland shows over the details of the Bengali life, Bengali landscape: in fact in the biographies of the two great religious savants and saints of India are to be found images of the rarest charm and beauty that describe in meticulous detail the Bengali landscape, its sunsets and the sunrises, and the measured rhythm with which the seasons playfully move on in a procession to conclude the solar cycle. Apparently, Romain Rolland is in sympathy with his subject and appears to have known his heroes in the world of the spirit long before they came to inhabit "the muddy vesture of decay" during their sojourn on earth. It is for the same reason, I suppose, that Sir Edwin Arnold reaches the highest water-mark ever attained by any I know, in the comprehension of the philosophy and message of Buddhism. Any one reading his "Light of Asia" is bound to get a feeling that its author must have been a contemporary of Budha and was perhaps as close to him as was Ananda, the greatest of his disciples. Thus it would appear that some of the great achievements in the history of literature have been made by those who have approached with sympathy the subject-matter of their study—a subject which to all intents and purposes was really outside the orbit of their day-to-day life. The most authoritative book on American Democracy is not written by an American but by de Tocqueville, a French diplomatist and thinker; and, similarly, the most authoritative commentary on British Government has not been written by an Englishman but by an American—A. Lawrence Lowell. And indeed our poet, Shah Latif, himself is able to enrich and adorn Sindhi language, although the contact of the family to which he belonged with that language was no more than barely a couple of generations old. His family came from Herat and had settled in Sind only a couple of generations or so before the emergence of Latif as a star of the first magnitude in the firmament of its literature.

In all spiritual perceptions, the extent or duration of contact seems to be immaterial. If we *know* another person at all, it is not because we have known him for a long time—here, as elsewhere, the first encounter though brief could be the most revealing. We know another at all, we know him before we meet him. There is some sort of pre-established sympathy between some souls which seems to transcend all limitations of space, time, and language which normally subside as impediments in the way of mutual understanding between them.



The greatest manifestations of the mind of man always seem to come from an unknown source. Truly speaking, it is the condescension of the spirit, a veritable coming down of the holy of holies in the soul of man. All great achievements in art and literature seem to point beyond man to that source from which all light in the last resort descends to show us the way. The present translation of Latif by our authoress is explicable only on some such hypothesis. The pattern of this translation must have, in the image of Plato's Philosophy, been laid up in Heaven and our authoress has only succeeded in calling it back to Life in the world of creation for all of us to appreciate and enjoy.

I have myself been a witness to that phase of life of the authoress when she was engaged on her work. To have been near her in those days was a sheer education. She worked like one possessed so much was she completely in the grip of poetry of Shah that it was impossible for any one not to notice her emotional involvement in the enterprise in which she was engaged. How many a time did I not hear her exclaim: "Oh! there is no poet like Latif"! "The greatest of the German masters in no way excels him"! "How much people of Sind have to be grateful to a poet who has transformed their language and suffused it with new life" and so on and so forth. Such and other tributes flowed spontaneously from her tongue in all their directness, in all their simplicity. In the ripe age in which she undertook the execution of the present work, her health was constantly seen as a mere reflex condition of the mood she was in. Shah Abdul Latif's message, the grandeur of his thought, the loftiness of his poetical flights, very much were part of her own life. If ever an artist was over-powered by the appeal of another artist, here was the case: our authoress had been captivated, nay, completely overawed by the magic of Shah's poetry.

In what follows, I will endeavour to set forth, for the benefit of those who have not read in Sindhi the poetry of Latif, the historical and cultural background against which Latif's poetry is to be appreciated and also comment briefly on some special features of his poetry to enable those who are not conversant with the grammar of the oriental poetry to be able to approach the present work in the spirit in which it deserves to be approached. I concede that although the enjoyment of poetry of Shah, as has been made available to us by our authoress in English, is possible without being

aware of the background information which I proceed hereafter to provide, I still feel that a greater and better understanding of that poetry would be made possible by reading carefully the reflections that I have been able to offer on the general significance and literary worth of the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif.

## (2)

Very little is known about the life of Shah Abdul Latif, and really no satisfactory account of it can be offered in view of the fact that there is a paucity of authentic historical evidence in terms of which even the main biographical features of that life could be reconstructed. By and large it is acknowledged that he was born in the year 1690 and lived well over a mature age of sixty three. All the scholars of Sindhi literature are agreed that Shah Abdul Karim, the great grand-father of our poet, was himself a poet of considerable stature and his verses that are extant till this day tend to show the religious and mystical bent of his mind. He settled down in Matiari and his Durgah at Bulri in Guni Taluka, Hyderabad District, till today attracts numerous disciples to the shrine which is held annually at his shrine. The father of our poet, and Habib Shah is believed to have lived in Hala Haveli, a place not far away from the 'Bhit' Shah, and it was here that our poet was born. He inherited from his elders all the cultural and religious background which seems to account for the power and appeal of his poetry. He was, as it appears, fully conversant with Arabic and Persian languages, and seems to have been familiar with the *Maunavi* of Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi and, of course, with the Holy Quran itself and the traditions of the Prophet. He is believed to have been a man who stood in detachment far away from the political strife of the day, and although he saw the emergence of Kalhora dynasty to power and was adored and respected by some of the typical leaders and representatives of that regime, he kept himself aloof from the political favouritisms and intrigues of the day. He himself chose the site upon which he built the village where he lived during the later part of his life. This place subsequently became famous as *Bhitshah* if only because his tomb remains there. A mausoleum which was subsequently built by Ghulam Shah Kalhora is a befitting monument and tribute to the memory of the poet in whom not only the cultural life of the eighteenth century Sind but the undying spirit of universal culture had found its immortal expression. He died in 1752.



The poet was a man of quiet retiring habits: he was contemplative to the core. He was wont to spend most of his time in mystical meditations. All through he was deeply concerned about his moral and spiritual development; he was ever watchful about his soul's journey in its aspiration to seek union with the Divine. His poetry was, according to the oral tradition which is full of authentic, sung in moments of inspiration and was treasured by his disciples, some of whom committed it to memory while others reduced it to writing. A comprehensive compilation of his verses in the form of *Risalo* took place more than a hundred years after his death. The *Risalo* by Ernest Trumpp was published in 1880 and was edited with a great deal of scholarly research and comment by Gurbuxani in 1923. An English rendering of some of the verses of our poet was made available in an Oxford University Press publication by H. T. Sorely in 1940 under the title: "Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit: His Poetry, Life and Times". The book is a scholarly treatise on the study of Literary, Social and Economic conditions in the eighteenth century Sind.

### (3)

Shah Abdul Latif is often considered as a *Sufi* poet in that a great deal of his poetry avowedly is suffused with the doctrine of *Tasawwuf* or what has been loosely called, Islamic Mysticism. The understanding of the fundamental tenets of this doctrine therefore is an essential preliminary for any student who means to get deeper into the truth of Latif's teaching.

By and large, the *Sufi* doctrine is, in the words of Sir William Jones, founded upon the belief "that nothing exists absolutely but God, that the human soul is an emanation of His Essence, and though divided for a time from his heavenly source, will be finally united with it; that the highest possible happiness will arise from the re-union and that the chief good of mankind in this transitional world consists in as perfect an union of the Eternal Spirit as the encumbrances of a mortal frame will allow; that for this purpose they should break all connection (ta'alluq) with extrinsic objects and pass through life without attachments, as a swimmer in the ocean strikes freely without the impediment of clothes; that they should be straight and free as the cypress, whose fruit is hardly perceptible, and not sink under a load like fruit-trees attached to a trellis; that if merely earthly charms have power to influence the

and the idea of celestial beauty must overwhelm it in ecstatic delight; that, for want of apt words to express the divine perfections and the ardour of devotion, we must borrow such expressions as approach the nearest to our ideas, and speak of beauty and love in a transient and mystical sense; that, like a reed torn from its native soil, like wax separated from its delicious honey, the soul of man needs its disunion with melancholy *musick* and sheds burning tears like the lighted taper, waiting passionately for the moment of its extinction, as a disengagement from earthly trammels, and the means of returning to its only beloved."

The source of the *Sufi* doctrine is ultimately to be traced to some of the verses contained in the Holy Quran, and, in particular, to the primeval covenant between man and the Creator. "Am I not the Lord?" was the question asked by God from the souls, and the answer by them was "Indeed Thou art". To affirm this bond, this unity belonging to the Spirit, to reflect this relationship of master and servant in obeying God's Will and in fulfilling His Law is the way of those who mean to negotiate the path that leads to the sovereign goal of obtaining a Vision of God (*Laaqa-ullah*). Latif's poetry is full with copious references to this cardinal doctrine of *Tasawwuf* and *Marui*, for instance, there is a clear-cut reference to this primeval contract. *Marui* who symbolises the 'finite self' wants to realise that as she in reality belongs to the King of Kings she cannot afford to submit to the will of Omar, the mere earthly king who had kept her in subjection far away from one to whom she was betrothed before the very beginning of things. She must, therefore, firmly reject all corrupt inducements that were being offered by Omar in order to seduce her into becoming his bride. She deliberately must turn away from these false blandishments, and to this end she must constantly remember her kinship with the people from whom she has been separated. This is the only way whereby she is to become in the process more conscious of her link with God. The *Sur* begins with these memorable words:

"When 'Be' was not yet said, nor was  
there flesh-bone scheme or plan;  
When Adam had not yet received  
his form, was not yet man;  
Then my relationship began,  
my recognition too.



"Am I not thy Lord?" came a voice;  
 a voice so sweet and clear;  
 And I said: "Yes" with all my heart  
 when I this voice did hear;  
 And with this bond I did adhere  
 that moment to my love."

In *Sur Sohni*, yet another aspect of this relationship between the soul of man and the Divine is stressed: this has reference to the inordinate capacity for total sacrifice of which a really ardent lover of God is capable. Before such a one can hope to realise his union with the Beloved, he must learn to give up everything. The '*Sohni*' in order to meet her beloved *Mehar*, (who is also sometimes referred to as "*Sahar*" by Latif) must renounce all that which is responsible for keeping her away from the object of her love; she must learn to *renounce this life in order to get that life*. Unlike the timid ones who cling to this life, she must learn to tear herself away from this earthly life:

"So many, many line the banks—  
 'Sahar'. 'Sahar'. they cry—  
 Afraid some to risk life, and some  
 Renouncingly would die,  
 But Sahar meets, who without sigh  
 Joyfully waters seek."

Sohni is not over-awed by the dark terrors of wintry night, nor even the torrential rains that have swelled the waters of an already turbulent river, nor again does she very much concern herself with the *jar* of unbaked clay, by means of which she proposes to cross the angry waters to meet her beloved on the other side of the river. Sohni must renounce everything. In the words of the Holy Quran "One cannot approach God and be near Him unless one gives up that which he loves the most." Not only must Sohni give up all that she has in order to realise her union with her beloved, but she must bless even the elements that seemingly confront her way with the dark and desperate terrors. Does she not say—

"Blest be dark night, the Moonlit night  
 be thou so far away,  
 So that except *Mehar's*, I may  
 not see another face."

*Sasui* and *Punhu* Latif adverts to the predicament of a lover by the bitter separation from his beloved because of his own indifference, ignorance or lack of love because of their indifference, ignorance or lack of love to the evil designs of the brother of her beloved, and how he must succeed precisely because at the moment when she has been awake, she was fast asleep! On waking she is faced with the terrible fate that has overtaken her. But by the time she is already too late! On the spiritual path one must face the awful truth: Cometh He like a thief at night.

With longing I lay down, with eyes  
 awake and found no sleep;  
 But when at last I slept, he came  
 and then I could not rise  
 When I awoke, for in what wise  
 is longing kin to sleep?

How often has not a devotee of God, lost the fruits of his mystical union simply because he was not at the critical moment when he was able to keep a strict watch over himself. *Sasui* too is alarmed. She, however, is not unnerved; she starts the search for the path leading forward for there is for her no time to lose. She is a part of Hope and his Heroines never surrender at the altar of dependency.

Similarly, in *Leela and Chanesar* the question of man's fall from grace is symbolised in a story of the Queen being thrown out from the palace by the King as a punishment for her having sold her husband for a mess of pottage. Having been lured by *Kaunri* into the possession of diamonds more than her husband, she found nothing wrong in exchanging the latter with the King, and on the King's discovery of intrigue and the resulting punishment of how cheaply the Queen had sold him just for the sake of being able to possess the diamonds, she was banished from the palace and thrown out into the street where she, like an accursed woman, must face the burden of her bitter life. She keeps up the story in those moving verses of Latif, the glorious days she had with her husband in contrast to the dark days of distress and despair that have overtaken her now that she is no longer with the man who has fallen from his favours! In the symbolism which is



provided by the plight of *Leela*, one sees how man too falls in the Divine grace in case he too like her were to barter away his allegiance to God in order to serve some petty Caesar or to possess the things of clay in which *Caesar* is interested.

Shah Latif is thus like most other mystical poets concerned and engaged in suggesting by means of significant images, parables and stories the secret of man's relationship to his Maker as also the nature of the path which he has to traverse in order to achieve the vision of God. The aim of the *Sufi* is to free the soul from the tyrannical yoke of passions, to deliver it from his wrong inclinations and evil instincts in order that in the purified heart thus attained there should constantly remain Love for God and longing for the adoration of His Holy Name. A mystic is one that account himself interested in transforming his inner life into making it a receptacle for the Divine Light to enter. He is interested in knowledge only in so far as that knowledge helps him to develop the inner resources, thanks to which, the light of truth can at all reach to the soul of man the essential nature of things. The mystic concerned not so much with knowledge as such, but with it in so far as it is a necessary means to ecstasy and initiation. He aims for salvation by devotion to and remembrance of God, and in meditating upon His attributes he absorbs their healing power as a cure for all the ills that infest his inner life. The aim is to purify the self, to sanctify it, to cleanse it in such a wise that it begins to absorb and then to reflect the Light that is Divine.

It is one of the cardinal principles of *Tasawwuf* that the soul of the highly evolved man communes directly with the holy Spirit and that it is only from on High that Divine energy, power and grace come to the soul of man. A man can, by cultivating a supernatural and a more sublime character, by leading a holy, as it were a sublime life; come to enjoy the highest gift that is reserved for him—the vision of the face of the Lord!

Thus according to the Sufi Doctrine a constant war is to be waged against evil, against ignorance, against sloth in all its shapes and forms. Man must learn to preserve his moral manhood by refusing to surrender at the altar of what appears to be an overpowering passion or allurements offered by some irresistible temptation. Poetry of Latif is full with this kind of ethical teaching. He often likens the *earthly self* in man to the *camel* who is drawn

strong impulse to the most poisonous creeper and prefers it to life-giving sustenance. One has to read *Sur Khumbat* to know the mind in which Latif views the problem of evil: having likened *Camel* as the incarnation of the lower self in man he says him in words that have become memorable:

I found him near some glorious tree  
that he some buds might eat;  
He mounted camel, on the sly  
and finds the salt-bush sweet.  
Who's me—I know not how to treat  
Camel that so confounds.

He goes not with the herd of late  
and no more will he graze;  
Since Cupid's arrow wounded him  
he hugs a curious craze:  
To his new love, with love-sick gaze  
he crawls, defying death.

He's not what he was yesterday  
returning to the herd;  
He never at the manger looks—  
all food doth disregard;  
He creeps, poison creepers on the sword  
he ate when with the herd.

#### (4)

Latif alludes not infrequently the symbols of the world of the senses to communicate the otherwise incommunicable truths of spiritual life. He believes that the visible world is a shadow of the spiritual world and although there is a close connection between the two, it can be perceived only by the eye of wisdom. There is a great deal of correspondence between the visible world with its materiality that is *Supernal* and for this reason there is not a single thing in the world of sense that is not a symbol for the 'seeing' eye of something in the yonder one. The word "symbol" derived from the Greek "symbollein" indicates spontaneous and permanent correspondence or uniting of parts, a concrete physical part and a reality of the spiritual order. The latter is "meant" by the symbolic expression. The symbol thus understood is a superior vehicle for the



communication of "mystical feeling" than a discursive statement—for the latter can be interpreted only conceptually whereas the former can fulfil an integrative function by disclosing a meaning.

Poetry of Latif is fundamentally allegorical in that he resorts to the vernacular of visible symbols in order to draw man's attention to the world of the invisible. He himself has said that his verses are the *Ayats* or the *signs*, that have the tendency in them to draw man's minds in the direction of the Beloved. All deeper truths can only be adequately communicated not so much by means of discursive statement as by means of symbols, myths, stories. Thus it was that Christ and Budha taught in parables and the argument of "Platonic Philosophy" after having engaged our attention in a logical analysis moves from the dialectical plane in the direction of 'myth'. Socrates' "Allegory of the Cave" in Plato's *Republic* probably the best exposition of relationship that man bears to the world of the *ideas*. The Platonic teaching emphasises that the things that we see are only shadows of the *ideas that alone are real* and we do not see them as substantive entities only because we ourselves as yet, are bound hand and foot, to look upon them not as they are but as they *appear* to us under the limitations that condition our outlook. We have not, as yet, been able to free ourselves from our habitual way of looking at them. We have not been able to look at the source of that *light* which makes their perception possible. All this is effectively communicated by the allegory of the cave which Plato has set-forth as follows:—

Socrates: Now compare our condition with this: Picture men living in a cave which has a wide mouth open toward the right. They are kept in the same places, looking forward only away from the mouth and unable to turn their heads, for their legs and necks have been fixed in chains from birth. A fire is burning higher up at their backs and between it and prisoners there is a road with a low wall built on its side, like the screen over which puppet players put up their puppets.

Glacccon: All that I see.

Socrates: See, again, there, men walking under cover of this low wall carrying past all sorts of things, copies of men and animals, in stone or wood and other materials; some of them may be talking and others not.

Glacccon: This is strange sort of comparison and these are strange prisoners.

Socrates: They are like ourselves. They see nothing but their own shadow, or one another's, which the fire throws on the walls of the caves. And so too with things carried past. If they were able to talk to one another would't they think that in naming the shadows they were naming the things that went by. And if their prison sent back echoes, whenever one of those who went by said a word would could they not but take it from the voice of the shadow.

Glacccon: By Zeus they would.

Thus also the Holy Quran teaches by stories and by parables. It has a considerable bulk of the oriental teaching is enshrined in parables, stories and other symbolic forms of expression. Latif, for instance, calls to our mind the image of a moth's affinity with the flame in order to suggest the lover's desire to offer himself as a sacrifice. Says he—

Go to the moth, the surest way  
of immolation ask

The moths, who throw themselves into  
the fire every day;  
Whose tender hearts become a prey  
to cupid's arrows sharp.

The moths assembled, gathering  
above a raging fire.....

Heat drove them not, no fear they had,  
flames did their hearts inspire.. .  
Their necks they lost, and on the pyre  
of truth they burst themselves.

If you call yourself a moth,  
then come, put out the fire's sway,  
Passion has so many baked  
but you roast passion's self today—  
Passion's flame with knowledge slay....  
of this to base folk give no hint.

Similarly, Latif takes up the ordinary stories that were current in his day and were more or less the stock-in-trade of the peasant



folk-lore of the time, stories like *Sasui Punhu*, *Sohni and Mahi*, *Leela Chanesar*, *Mumal Rano*, *Omar Marui*, were utilised by him for the purpose of communicating the hidden truth about man's existence, in particular the secret which lies locked in the heart-mystery. His interest in the stories as such was not that of a dramatic poet for he is not even interested in giving the exact details by way of narration. In fact, he assumes that the heart of his songs know these stories and all he sets out to do is to refer to the salient features and the main incidents of these stories with a view to disclosing the spiritual significance of the human situation involved in these episodes.

### (5)

Many have traced the growth of *Tasawwuf* or Islamic Mysticism to the teaching of the Quranic verses. References are usually made to the Quranic statements such as (a) 'God is nearer to man than the veins of his neck', (b) 'God is Light of Heavens and Earth', (c) 'Upon everything is inscribed the decree of ceasing-to-be except the Face of the Lord who abideth for ever in all His Glory and Majesty', (d) 'We are from God and to God is our return', (e) 'My servant asks about Me, lo, I am near', (f) 'And in the Earth are signs to those of real Faith and in yourself. What! do you not see that I have founded the basic principles upon which the doctrine of Sufism is founded. Although this approach to the origin and development of mysticism is basically correct, it cannot be forgotten that according to the *Quran* the gulf that separates man, who is no more than a slave, from God, Who is his Master, is too great to admit of the possibility of what most mystics insist upon as being the essence of their experience, namely, union with God or their becoming one-with-God. According to the *Quran*, the primary emphasis has to be laid on man's duty to obey the Divine Will and to reflect in his personal conduct the attributes of God. And in so far as mysticism teaches that this world is to be *renounced* and the life of the world is to be *condemned* for the reason that it presents the chief source of distraction for man to fulfil the Law, it would seem to be against the spirit of Islam which clearly enjoins that the Kingdom of God is to be realised on earth. Islam does not view with favour the life of asceticism and renunciation which some schools of Sufism seem to enjoin upon their votaries. It is by living the earthly life in conformity with the Law that we are to realise the

good which is possible to man—namely, his increasing participation in the Divine Life. It is the exaggerated emphasis then placed by some of the mystics on our giving up that ties us to the world (as though it were a pre-condition of our attaining the highest goal of which we are capable) which has led some well meaning thinkers to take serious exception to the validity of this doctrine. In the poetry of Shah Waliullah there is no such mis-placed and mis-directed emphasis. All his preaches is that we should be constantly aware of our goal even when we are engaged in this work-a-day life. For him it is the spirit and manner in which we pursue our duties that is really important. Shah would seem to be the need for man to live a life of active endeavour and the cultivation of the inner life of the spirit in this world. The way of living in the world and yet being out of it has been the principal subject-matter of our poet's attention. For him the problem is presented as follows:

The loved-ones bound me—  
Threw me into waters deep:

And said: "Now dry do keep,  
And getting wet avoid."

That that is into water thrown  
From getting wet, how could be free?  
Enlightened one, this mystery  
How I might solve it, say.

For the answer to the problem is also clear:

Only in contemplation, but  
Of law neither neglectful be....  
Your heart get used to Reality  
Which is your Destiny to see;  
Be resolute, and verily  
You'll be immune from getting wet.

It should be noticed that according to Latif we are not to be out of the Law and while remaining in the world we are to remind ourselves of our higher Destiny and be resolute in our attempt to fulfil the Law.

For one has exhausted the possibilities of fully and earnestly leading a worldly life and performing earthly tasks, with, what may be



called "active" Consciousness, a condition is reached in which the highly evolved person begins to realise that his purpose on earth is fulfilled. It is only thereafter that the Soul within begins to find a more *direct access* to the Divine Light than otherwise possible—if its manifestations are to be discerned within the frame-work of earthly life. It is this condition of maturity which is attained when we live earnestly and fulfil our earthly duty that is described by Shah in the last Sur, a most potent of Surs, that is *Sur Sohni*, and our translator very rightly placed it as the conclusion of the message of Latif:

"On what count am I here? O why  
bereft of loved ones face?  
'You preach: 'Deflect from sin', but I  
your virtue do deny—  
Moral control I do not need  
nor do for music sigh.—  
Keep closed your lips, and from within  
yourself you'll beautify—  
These that on 'Top' of waters flow  
are bubbles that belie.—  
Feed on selflessness, for your love  
Mincemeat to be, than try—  
If headlong into dirt you rush  
yourself you'll purify—  
Nought does possess more wealth than dust  
nothing with dust can vie,—  
Who runs by stirrup of the guide  
the other side will spy.—  
Falcon, pick up your greedy self  
and fly with it on high.—  
Don't lose sight of the friend, walking  
in veils that mystify.—  
More than Oneness in love, is like  
splitting two-lettered tie—  
Those who do long for wine of love  
with purest them supply—  
These ravings are the vain reply  
of tortured, sickly one,—  
On what count am I here, Oh, why?  
Bereft of loved ones face.

earthly, through earthly means, that the journey of the Soul to the Maker is to be completed. Hence the supreme aim of realising the fullness of Life in this life: for those who stand here will be blind there too.

## (6)

Divine knowledge of God comes to the spiritual man who attempts to be conscious about his role here-below, after he has learnt so to control his response to his day's activities that he makes of himself an instrument that is constantly at the service of the Divine. The highest reward that is given to man is to experience a phase of life in which all that is in him is seen as the expression of the Divine Will. Such persons to the Light of God a transparent medium—nothing can then interfere with the lustre of that sacred flame whose light and heat sustains life in all its forms.

The spiritual knowledge of God comes to man when he has learnt the supremely difficult lesson of silencing the irrelevant desires of his animal self and when he, by developing his concentration, has got rid of false imagination and mental projections, and has reached a degree of serenity in which the Light of Truth can reflect itself in him. The continuity of those who have thus been 'touched' by the Divine is attested by an astonishing evidence of "objective truth" gained by them, of seeing things as they are in truth, of the deliverance of higher consciousness from the lower consciousness of man is probably one of the best reasons that there can be for believing in God's Existence and

that ages and climes man has been haunted by the Divine Presence and has in diverse forms attempted to absorb it and be united by it. The longing to realise this Presence and to give it up wholly at its altar is the quintessence of all religious experience. Thus the mystics in India and China, in Europe and elsewhere, all seem to have been blessed by a second sight and have been privileged to see beyond the mere appearances into the creative phase of life whence they emerge and to which is their ultimate aim. Of course there has been variations on the theme of spiritual experience; the religious background has conditioned the



various formulations in terms of which the mystics have attempted to set-forth the outline of the kind of knowledge which they have been able to gain as a result of these mystical experiences.

Broadly speaking, there are two dominant modes of comprehending the morphology of mystical experiences: these are (a) the 'finite self' within man experiences its union with Infinite much in the manner in which the *dew drop* sinks into the *shining sea*, and (b) the experience of the finite self who swallows the Infinite by the appropriation and progressive assimilation of its glory. The Vedantists, on the other hand, steer clear of this dichotomy in that they claim that *Atma*, the finite self, is the *Brahma* and the spiritual progress for man does not lie in the '*Atma*' disappearing in the *Brahma* as in the increasing awareness that *Atma* is *Brahma*. The universe is *Brahma* entire and indivisible; One only without the second (*Advaita*); and it is only the lower knowledge that has endowed *Brahma* with personality (*Saguna*). It is this ignorance that prevents men rising to the height of metaphysical monistic concept. The illusory self regards itself as an agent and thereby becomes subject to *Samsara*. As long as nescience has not been abolished, the individuality of self is not abolished and the individual soul continues to be the sphere of good and evil. By intuitive knowledge it can escape from *Karma* and the misery of existence by attaining *mukhi* or emancipation by way of '*Vara Vidya*' (higher knowledge). Salvation is the result of the realisation that everything except the *Atma* is illusion and that this inner self is nothing less than the unconditional Reality (*Brahma*) "*That Thou art*". By and large the Buddhists seem to interpret mystical experience in the image of the *dew drop* slipping into the shining sea and the Muslim mystics in the image of the *dew drop* swallowing the *shining sea*. "Without renouncing the 'self'," so runs Buddha's teaching, "we cannot overcome sorrow and suffering." Ego itself is devoid of permanence, an illusory aggregate of causally conditioned elements (*skandhas*) of the life impulse comprising sensations and ideas pertaining to the body, the feelings of emotional state perception, volitional mental faculties, cognition. There is no room in the Buddhist doctrine for an individual entity capable of realising its identity with *Brahma*, for both God and Human Soul, the Absolute and *Atma* are rigidly excluded. The self is only a name—and the belief in *I am* is a delusion. What transmigrates is only individual *karma*, a stream of energy clothing itself in body after body and giving

it as a resultant effect of actions performed in a former state of existence. It is therefore a creative dynamic from the operations of which it is impossible to escape so long as the wheel of life continues to revolve. As this is set in motion by will, desire and emotion, the only way to put an end to the ceaseless rotation is to break the chain of causation. Once the craving for existence is broken, freedom is secured—and *Nirvana* attained; the truth-possesses in the void as a flame returns to the invisible state of in which it existed prior to its manifestation in the form of the fire" (Sec E.O. Jamic's Comparative Religion, pp. 165-7). It is in this sense that the self merges in the wider synthesis—*dew drop* slips into the shining sea.

In the way of Muslim thought, speaking very generally, it is not to the knowledge situation that the Divine is revealed directly to the heart in an immediate vision. The mystic's heart sees (or feels) all the Divine Perfections which otherwise are scattered in endless multiplicity through the universe. In fact it is by progressive assimilation of the Divine attributes that the self in us evolves and steadily acquires nearness to the Divine. The process is not of union but of approximation—the dialogue between the 'I' and 'Thou' the *servant* and the *Master* remains. How can a mystic, as the Arabi, die to himself and yet be conscious of God? Consciousness irrespective of its object implies continuation of self. A going away of 'self' cannot mean anything but sleep. In such a case the mystic is neither with himself nor with his Lord; he is left unaware. The mystical experience is one which could be understood as a lover's absorption in the beloved. It is in this sense the term "*Fana*" is to be understood—not the disappearance of the "finite self" but its heightened capacity to absorb within itself the light of the Divine self—it is the case of the *dew drop* following the shining sea. As Latif puts it in "*Sohmi Mehar*": "*When sa'ir bodya mundh badyo mehran*" (Hundreds of them have been drowned by the Ocean, But lo; the *woman* has drowned the ocean itself). The whole universe is but a tiny drop in the ocean that is, but the soul of man has the capacity to absorb its own within itself!

Latif's poetry playfully deals with all these variegated aspects of mystical experience. He was, so it seems, a widely travelled man and had come in close contact with the Vedantist and Buddhist theories of religious beliefs and practices. He affirms oneness of



life over and over again and describes the soul's journey to in a manner which is all his own. As an instance of his would refer to the way in which he suggests the meaning of various stages of development through which we pass when out to negotiate the way that leads to God. The several through which the 'Salik' (inquirer after truth) passes before reaches 'perfect knowledge' are, according to the mystic as expounded by T.P. Hughes, the following:

"The natural state of every Moslem is *Nasut* (human) in which state the disciple must observe the precepts of the or shariat but as this is the lower form of spiritual existence the performance of the journey is enjoined upon every seeker after truth.

"The following are the stages (*Manazil*) which Soofi perform. Having become a searcher after God (*Talib*) he enters the first stage of "*Ubudiyat*", "service". When the Divine attraction has developed his inclination into love of God, said to have reached the second stage of *Ishek*—Love. This Divine Love expelling all worldly desires from his heart, he enters at the stage of *Zuhd* (seclusion) occupying himself henceforth with contemplation and the investigation of metaphysical theologies concerning nature, attributes and works of which are the characteristics of the Soofi system he reaches the fourth stage of *Ma'rifat*—knowledge: the fifth stage is *Wajd*—"ecstasy". During the next stage he is supposed to remain a revelation of the true Nature of Godhead and to have reached the sixth stage of *Haquiqat*—"Truth". The next is that of *Wasl* "Union with God".

Latif covers this ground in a single stanza. He admonishes—

"*Saray sikh sabaq, shariat sando Sohni*  
*Tariqata tikho wahay, Haquiqat jo haq*  
*Ma'rifat marak, asul A'shiqann khey.*"

Remember to learn the lesson of Shariat, O Sohni  
Far excels from the Tariqat's way the truth of Haquiqat  
Lo! it is the (station) of Ma'rifat that in reality is the revelation of love

## (7)

A great deal has been said about "poets" and "poetry" by art critics and numerous theories have been propounded in an attempt to explain the relative superiority of the art of poetry and the overwhelmingly great impact it makes upon the soul of man. Of course, apart, all great poets seem to be born and not made—chiefly in the sense that, what they bring with themselves seems to be far more important than anything which could be said to come from their conscious efforts to serve the Muse of Poetry. A great poet cannot simply be explained away: he is a unique and appears to be established by some divine decree to become a special vehicle for the communication in memorable language of great perceptions and insights in, and the enigmas of, human existence. Of such poet it must be that Tennyson was thinking when

"The poet in a golden clime was born  
with golden stars above;

Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,

The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,

He saw thro' his own soul.

The marvel of the Everlasting Will,

An open scroll,

Before him lay."

Latif too belongs to the rank and file of those "world poets" who have been gratefully acknowledged by posterity as being the benefactors of mankind in that they have unravelled the mystery that lies behind the veil. By and large, I suspect that his power and appeal are to be attributed to the fact that the primary impulse which is at the root of his poetical genius comes from the world of musical harmony and melody. For he is essentially a divine minstrel and his poetry is musical to the core. The intellectual content of the poetry of Latif inevitably and automatically springs from his communion with the soul of music. With him the law seems to be: serve ye well first the muse of music and everything else would be added unto thee.

Upon deeper reflection it would appear that there is some unbreakable nexus between the deliverance of musical sense and the world of meaning, of objective truth. In all great poetry



the thought content which strikes us appears to come in as though it were a by-product: it is brought forth much in the manner which the tidal waves of the ocean rising in aspiration higher than the mere surface of the heaving bosom of a restless ocean in vain attempt to reach the moon high up in the Heaven, on the downward course rebound and lash against the barren seashore depositing upon it in the process some pretty shells and precious stones. The soul of a poet *wells up* in obedience to the law of musical harmony and failing fully to fulfil it, reaches the sphere of conscious verbalisation and deposits the deeper truths as a by-product of his song.

Latif's poetry is the incarnation of his keen sense for musical values. It is singable; it has been conceived in the image of oral rather than a written expression. The appeal that his poetry makes is pre-eminently due to the musical setting in which it is cast. No wonder the *Risalo* is divided into *Surs*: each *Sur* being subsumed under some well known *Rag* or *Ragni* in which the content of the song is cast.

The poetry of Latif was not *composed* in the sense in which modern poetry is composed—it was sung and the message emerged dressed in an oral word for those who heard it. The disciples of the poet and other co-adjutors who sat with him when Latif sang songs essentially partook of the feast of music that was served him: the poetic truth emerged automatically as a matter of course from his song. Latif sung his poetry: he did not write it and it was handed over as a part of oral tradition. It was much later, as has been remarked earlier, in point of time that it was published in the form of a written verse and made available to posterity.

The magic of the poetical utterances of Latif can only be understood if the image of a master musician is steadily kept in view. The secret and the charm of his poetry is inevitably the secret of the charm of the musical art. To the Sindhi ear it is the beauty of the song and the rhythmic cadences that flow as a spontaneous outpouring of melody and move the heart from one image to another, that seems to be the distinctive feature of his poetry. The poetic truth behind the utterance is simple and elemental but is powerfully conveyed precisely because the thought becomes audible not as word but as music.

Latif makes the truth behind the song stand by itself and achieves this result by successfully stripping it off the load of literal

that is inherent in a mere verbalisation of his thought by making its musical expression assert itself as a primary phenomenon. The grandeur of his poetry lies in his capacity to make it stand by itself, in all its natural simplicity, revealed by nothing other than its own light. He does not make the poetic truth shine by any artificial design: all he does is to raise the emotional level of the hearer of his song by stirring and stimulating his innate love of harmony and order. This incidentally is the explanation of the power and appeal of the poetry of all the great classical poets of mankind such as Homer, Chaucer, Firdusi, etc. who flourished before the muse of poetry was made to surrender itself at the altar of the literary devices in which every word and phrase was 'calculated' and 'weighed' before it was grudgingly doled out to conform to some artificially conceived pattern of poetic excellence. Thus was blank verse itself born—and no wonder it was soon discovered by sensitive people that it was blander than the blank prose! In this shift of emphasis from inspired utterance to 'carefully calculated' verbalisation, we see the truth of Macaulay's well known dictum—namely, as the civilisation progresses, poetry declines. That is why most of the modern poetry is dull and mechanical; it is laboured and cerebral to the core: it is by no means spontaneous outpouring of a deeply felt emotion of a sensitive soul. On the other hand, when Milton attempts the glorious manner of—

"Seasons return, but not to me returns

Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn...."

what is it that helps him to reach these Olympian heights of achieving such a charming and sublime expression? I suggest that the miracle is due to the deliverance of his *musical sense*. All great poetry is anchored in the soil of music—and when you detach the content of it therefrom, it withers away and dies! All this proves that there is some mysterious connection between the melody that the inner ear can *hear* and the world of truth that the inner *eye* can behold. That is in effect what, Leight Hunt in his famous essay on 'What is poetry', while comparing poetry with other arts, says. In his words—

"Poetry includes whatever painting can be made visible to the mind's eye and whatsoever of music can be conveyed by sound and proportion without singing or instrumentality. But it surpasses those divine arts in suggestiveness in range and intellectual wealth—the first in the expression of thought concentration of images and the triumph



over space and time; the second, in all that can be done with speech, apart from tones and modulation of pure sound.

Poetry of Latif is the most telling expression I know of what might be called "musical thought". "A musical thought" is one spoken by a mind that has penetrated into the inner heart of things; detected the inner most mystery of it, namely, the melody that lies hidden in it; the inward harmony of coherence which is its soul, whereby it exists and has a right to be, in this world. All inmost things we say are melodious; naturally utter themselves in song. The meaning of song goes deep. Who is there that, in logical words, can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech which leads us to the edge of the Infinite and let us for a moment gaze into that!"

The question herein raised by Carlyle can only be answered by one who has understood the extent of power that musical utterance can exercise over the soul of man. In one of his most soul-stirring *Surs*, called *Sorath*, Latif provides us with all indications conceivable of coming to the conclusion that he at least was quite aware of the remarkable influence which music has over the soul of man. The *Sur* was virtually the *Sur* that was sung by Latif to set forth his understanding of the effect of music. The story on which the *Sur* draws for its message is well known but may as well be recounted in brief outline.

It is said that there was a kind-hearted King by the name of Rai Diach who ruled over Junagarh. He was very much loved by his people. He had a sister to whom a son was born (Beejal by name) but as the astrologers had predicted that he would cut off the head of Rai Diach he, while yet a babe, was cast away in a box down the river. The child was picked up by a professional musician and grew under his influence to be a remarkable musician himself. There was another King, Anirai by name, who ruled a neighbouring state and it is said that when his eighth daughter was born he got rid of her by locking her up in a wooden box which he threw away in a flowing river. This girl was eventually rescued by a potter who brought her up and named her as *Sorath*. The girl was beautiful beyond belief and there were many princes who asked for her hand in marriage and even her father, Anirai, not knowing that *Sorath* was his own daughter, also pressed his claim for her marriage. But fortunately, the potter was helpless in that although he was willing to get *Sorath's* marriage solemnised with Anirai, he found that

and had been clandestinely removed by Rai Diach with whom he was on his own accord, eventually married. This, it is said, annoyed Rai Diach so much that he led an army to lay siege of the city of Junagarh and did his utmost to reduce Rai Diach to a state of helplessness. But Rai Diach was no match against the siege but announced that anyone who could bring the head of Rai Diach as an offering to him would get a considerable wealth from him as his reward. On hearing this announcement, Beejal decided to try his luck and, having picked up a *Sur*, the musical instrument which he had learned to play to entertain the court, left for Junagarh. Rai Diach by this time, for his part, was warned by the court astrologers that as he during a certain period was covering 40 days of his life was under the influence of some evil planets, it was quite likely that he may have to lose his life in that period. He, therefore, as a measure of protection, had built a castle high up on the top of Grinar mountains and had stationed a heavy guard to prevent the possibility of any intruder getting access to the palace where he had sought refuge. Nobody, however, could dare go up on the Grinar mountains and every one knew that mere force of arms was not enough aid to reach the top. But the musician was not subject to any such limitation: the sound of the music that Beejal could make upon his musical instrument knew of no such barriers, and as he played the soft and sweet melodies in the quiet hour of the night, the King, having heard them, was moved and became restless. Thinking that no harm could conceivably result from the circumstance of a mere musician coming up to his presence, he summoned Beejal into his audience and requested him to spend the remaining 39 nights and give him the benefit of listening to his music. For all these nights Beejal played music for the King who was bewitched by its appeal, and as the story has it, such was the effect of the music of Beejal on the King that tears would roll down his cheek as he heard the musician play for him. In a moment of supreme ecstasy he asked the musician to name any thing he wanted by way of reward, but then Beejal declined to designate the usual types of rewards that are offered to musicians: money, lands, comforts, palaces and such other things. He told the King, somewhat cynically, that he had not the ability to give that which alone could be an adequate recompense for his art. The King persisted and Beejal came out with his demand and asked for his head as the reward. The King



who had bound himself to fulfil the word he had given, allowed his head to be cut off and made an offering to the musician.

This tale of the King and the Minstrel has been made a peg by Latif upon which to hang the coat of a new meaning; it has been utilised to reveal the esoteric implication of the Sufi teaching which enjoins that without implicitly obeying the commands laid down by his spiritual preceptor, the disciple can never hope to reach his goal. Beejal symbolises the spiritual preceptor and the king is the disciple on the path, who must obey all the orders he receives even to the point of parting with his own life. Latif chose the power of music as the highest operative factor in terms of which to explain the magical effect it has upon the soul of the listener. This *Sur* is full with numerous references to the symbolic meaning and significance of the musician's art. In particular witness the following stanzas:

(a) Few men there be who discovered the key

when to life's great mystery they found their way  
"Man is My secret and I am his," is the ever

recurring refrain,

The "Monarch" and "Minstrel" although two,  
after the song were melted into Oneness.

(b) *Sorath* is no more, it is all peace, the

tents have been removed by Khanghar

There is no music, no appearance, neither are  
the musical strings in motion.

—Only after all this was attained was it that

Beejal restored the head (life) to the king.

In *Sur Sorath* we have a symbolic representation of the role that aesthetic emotion plays in the development of the human personality. This *Sur*, both in its dramatic effect and formalist delineation, is the supreme illustration of Carlyle's definition of poetry as "musical thought" and "the poet as being one who thinks in that manner." "At bottom" says Carlyle "he turns still on power of intellect; it's man's sincerity and depth of vision that makes him a poet. See deep enough and you see musically, the heart of nature being everywhere music, if you can only read it."

(8)

I have not attempted in this brief introduction to deal with the beauties that one discovers in the formalistic expression of Latif

poetry, because it is only in the original verses that these can be discerned. Latif has sung about nature with a great deal of emotional sincerity and earnestness. His references to the Sand Dunes and to the Mountain Passes in *Sur Sasui*, to the ever-changing facets of the Sea and the life of the mariners who sail to their destination upon it in *Sur Samundi*; to the lives of the humbler folk, the rustics in the 18th century Sind in *Sur Marui*, etc. tend to show the power of his observation, on the one hand, and the remarkable poetical genius at work, on the other. All this enabled him to make the alphabet of his experience subserve the communication of spiritual significance and hidden meaning that lies at the back of them.

A deep and intimate study of the poetry of Latif makes one feel what is to be *Insane Kamil*, a completely integrated Man, and it is the unusual extent to which our authoress by her remarkable translation in English of the verses of Latif has helped us to become aware of this meaningfully, that makes us feel grateful to her—yes, "grateful" is the word if only because no sentiment is more expressive of our Humanity.

19th December, 1963.

70-Moslemabad,  
Karachi.

A. K. BROHI







## Kalyan—I

### (PEACE)

#### I

The One Creator, the all great;

Lord of the universe—

The living, the original;

Ruler with power innate;

The giver, the sustainer,

the unique, compassionate;

This master praise, to Him alone  
thyself in praise prostrate..

The generous, who does create  
the universe in pairs..

#### 2

None shares His Glory, "He was..is,  
shall be" ..who this doth say

Accepts Mohammad as 'guide'

with heart and love's true sway;

None from amongst those lost their way  
or ever went astray.

#### 3

"He is without a partner", when

this glorious news you break—

With love and knowledge, Mohammad

accept..as cause him take

Why would you then obeisance make  
to others after that?



4

From One, many to being came;  
 'many' but Oneness is;  
 Don't get confounded, Reality  
 is 'One', this truth don't miss—  
 Commotions' vast display—all this  
 I vow, of Loved-one is.

5

The Echo and the call are same,  
 if you sound's secret knew—  
 They both were one, but two became  
 only when 'hearing' came.

6

A thousand doors and windows too,  
 the palace has...but see,  
 Wherever I might go or be  
 master confronts me there.

7

If you have learnt to long, by pain  
 be not distressed—  
 Secret of love's sorrow must be  
 never confessed—  
 Suffering is by the heart caressed,  
 and there it is preserved.

8

The poison-drinking lovers, lured  
 by poison sweet, drink more and more;  
 To bitterness of fatal cup,  
 the poison-drinkers are innured,  
 Though wounds are festering, and uncured,  
 no whisper to the vulgar goes.

9

All from Beloved's side is sweet  
 whate'er He gives to you,  
 There is no bitter, if you knew  
 the secret how to taste.

10

There is a call to gallows, friends,  
 will any of you go?  
 Those who do talk of love may know  
 to gallows they must speed.

11

If you a draught desire  
 to tavern find your way;  
 Thy head do sever, and that head  
 beside the barrel lay;  
 Only when you this price do pay  
 then few cups you may quaff.



## 12

The genuine lover, for his head  
 care and concern has none;  
 He cuts it off—joins it with breath  
 as gift then hands it on;  
 Carves down to shoulders, from loved-one  
 then begs for love's return.

## 13

To guard and to preserve the head,  
 the lover's business is not this—  
 One of Beloved's glance is worth  
 so many hundreds heads of his—  
 Flesh, skin and bone, and all there is,  
 the 'least' of Loved-one, equals not.

## Kalyan Yaman—II (PATH TO PEACE)

## I

Thou art the friend; the Healer thou;  
 For every pain the remedy—  
 Cure for my heart, thy voice alone  
 the only cure it is for me . . .  
 The reason why I call for thee  
 is: none can cure my heart but thou.

## 2

Thou art the friend, the Healer thou  
 for every ailment balm dost send;  
 Merciful God—all drugs are vain;  
 the pains by drugs will never end;  
 Unless ordered by thee O friend,  
 no drug will ever sickness cure.

## 3

Thou art the friend, the Healer thou;  
 for sufferings thou the remedy;  
 Thou givest, curest disease, dost guide,  
 master thou art eternally—  
 Yet, I am wonderstruck to see  
 that your physicians still provide.

## 4

Strike friend—thy hand raise, favour me—  
 hold not your hand, and should I die  
 By such death I shall honoured be  
 which through this wound is caused.



## II

5

Today still groans the thatches fill,  
 where wounded lie and suffer;  
 Although it is their twilight, still  
 same ointments there and dressings.

6

Poor wounded ones, so restless grow,  
 yet grateful are for pain;  
 For ever forward wish to go  
 and here would not remain.

7

Mother, I cannot trust in those  
 whose eyes with tears do over-flow—  
 Who bring the water to their eyes,  
 their sorrow to the world to show;  
 Who love Beloved, hide their woe,  
 no tears they show, nor speak about—

8

Physician, blundering and unwise,  
 you cauterise my skin, and treat  
 With slops my heart-ache, know to whom  
 scaffold a bridal-bed supplies,  
 The one beatific vision lies  
 in death, which is the union sweet.

9

Physicians you consulted but  
 dicting you ignored..  
 Had you obeyed, perhaps restored  
 to health you would be now.

## Kalyan Yaman—II

37

10

Physicians were my neighbours near  
 I ne'er asked their advice—  
 Therefore I find that in mine eyes  
 cataracts I now have formed.

III

11

Ah! suddenly they found themselves  
 in sphere of love... and there  
 They cut their heads, left trunks apart  
 such garland they did wear!  
 Beauteous they were... to loved ones fair  
 I saw them give their heads away!

12

Go to the moth, the surest way  
 of immolation ask—  
 The moths, who throw themselves into  
 the fire every day;  
 Whose tender hearts became a prey  
 to cupid's arrows sharp.

13

The moths assembled, gathering  
 above a raging fire....  
 Heat drove them not, no fear they had,  
 flames did their hearts inspire—  
 Their necks they lost, and on the pyre  
 of truth they burnt themselves.



## 14

If you call yourself a moth,  
 from blaze return not terrified;  
 Enter by the loved-one's light  
 and be ever glorified  
 You are still unbaked... beside  
 not yet with kiln acquainted are.

## 15

If you call yourself a moth,  
 then come, put out the fires sway,  
 Passion has so many baked  
 but you roast passion's 'Self' today—  
 Passion's flame with knowledge slay...  
 of this to base folk give no hint.

## 16

Happy those who acquaintance make  
 with goodly grinding wheel  
 Their rapiers never then shall take  
 to rust, nor will corrode.

## 17

Apprentice of the blacksmith, works  
 the bellows not with care;  
 Not close to fire goes, he fears  
 love sparks that issue there.  
 And yet proclaims he every where;  
 "full-fledged blacksmith am I"!

## 18

Turn your head into an anvil,  
 then for smithy do enquire,  
 There the hammer-strokes of fire  
 may turn you into steel.—

## 19

When I an arrow do receive  
 on that spot I remain;  
 Perhaps my Hero-love again  
 will strike in mercy sweet.

## 20

Physician give no medicine.  
 may health I never see....  
 May be, enquiring after me  
 my love to me will come.

## 21

Sacrifice your head, and 'suffer'  
 if loved-ones send dismay..  
 Say not, 'Forsaken' 't is their way  
 like this to form their links.

## 22

Those that cut me up, became  
 the kindly surgeons too—  
 The wound they quickly dressed, and cured  
 within a day the same  
 Oh heart! and now make this your aim  
 "stay with them, and be safe from wounds".



23

As long there is no need, so long  
 physician is not here..  
 But when one day pain does appear  
 it is as though the leech had come !

## IV

24

They read and read, but what they read  
 their hearts refuse to store—  
 The more they pages turn, the more  
 are deeply steeped in sin.

25

O friend, why are you still inclined  
 to waste paper and ink—  
 Go rather forth and try to find  
 the source where words were formed.

26

The world with 'I' doth overflow  
 and with it flaunts about—  
 But its own 'Self' it doth not know..  
 't is a magician's spell.

27

They do not heed the glorious line  
 that does begin with 'A'—  
 In vain they look for the Divine,  
 though page on page they turn.

28

You only read the letter 'A'—  
 all other pages put aside—  
 Book-reading nothing will convey—  
 but your being purify.

29

Unuttered is unknown...the uttered  
 is never understood...behold,  
 Although it be as true as gold,  
 humanity takes never note.—

## V

30

By 'giving' they were hurt, —'not giving'  
 to them contentment brought—  
 So they became *sufies*, as nought  
 they did take with themselves.

31

To hear vile words, and not return,  
 but hear them silently;  
 This is the pearl, most precious pearl,  
 we in guide's teachings see—  
 But decked with jewels he will be  
 who with 'Silence' the Ego kills.



## 32

Those who never forgot the sorrow,  
 and lesson learnt of woe—  
 The slate of thought within both hand:  
 'silence' they study so—  
 They only read page which does show  
 Beloved's lovely face.

## 33

Patience, humility adopt,  
 for anger is disease—  
 Forbearance bringeth joy and 'peace',  
 if you would understand.

## 34

The inoffensive don't offend  
 forget who do offend—  
 In this refined and cultured way  
 thy day and night do spend  
 Thus meditating, humbly walk,  
 until thy life doth end—  
 A Lawyer keep within, O friend,  
 to blush not, facing judge.

## 35

As long as of this daily world  
 no glimpses you obtain—  
 A perfect view you will not gain  
 of your love Heavenly.

## 36

True lovers never will forget  
 their Love Divine, until one day  
 Their final breath will pass away  
 as tearful sigh.



# Khambat—III (HAVEN)

I

I

A moonlit night, an open plain,  
and so far yet to go;  
My camel look not back, for you  
't is shame to waver so;  
Be steady, resolute, and show  
my loved-ones you can reach.

2

O full moon! though you rise adorned,  
your beauty to enhance;  
You are not a blink worth of my love  
With all charms you advance,  
Since your whole being but one glance  
of the Beloved is.

3

A hundred suns may rise, and blaze  
four score-four moons may shine;  
I vow, without Beloved mine  
I am in darkest night.

4

O moon, by magic fade away;  
may you be shorn of light—  
Or hide yourself so that I might  
the soul's Beloved meet.

5

In darkest midnight, the Beloved  
shows himself so clear;  
the moon and plciades disappear  
yea, like an echo mere.

II

6

O moon, cast first thy silver-ray  
on the Beloved when you rise;  
And for thy Maker's sake, O moon  
message of helpless one convey;  
"My hopeful longing eyes, thy way  
with tears are watching everyday."

7

O moon, the moment that you rise  
first glance at the Beloved cast  
Say to the dear one: I am sick  
In you my only comfort lies  
"My hopeful and relying eyes  
Are ever set expecting you."

8

O moon, when you ascend the skies  
first glance at the Beloved cast  
My message to the friend convey  
Correctly all, and all precise  
"My hopeful and relying eyes  
are ever set expecting thee."



## 9

Rise moon, see the Beloved—thou  
 art near and far am I  
 Presence of Him in scented dew  
 I feel, that in night doth lie—  
 On foot I cannot reach and  
 father camel can't supply  
 On which riding, ere dawn draws nigh  
 I easily could reach.

---

## 10

I shall die longing, love is kind  
 but Oh... so far is He  
 Father gives camel not to me—  
 I am too weak to walk.

---

## 11

To the Beloved, when you rise  
 O moon, thy very first glance send;  
 And all the messages I give  
 O moon, convey in truthful wise;  
 "My hopeful and relying eyes  
 are ever set expecting you."

---

## 12

Thy glance let the Beloved meet,  
 O moon, and my requests submit  
 Befittingly; above courtyard  
 of the Beloved bow and greet;  
 Speak gently... on Beloved's feet  
 both of thy light-hands softly lay.

---

## 13

O moon, all my entreaties safe  
 into thy shining garment tie,  
 Low'ring your head, to loved one tell  
 in what a wretched state am I;  
 Remember; to the place you hie  
 That is whole universe's Hope.

---

## 11

## 14

O camel! spurn thy slothful mood—  
 No longer now delay!  
 But once unite me with my love  
 no more the truant play,  
 But speed, ere night doth pass away  
 to meet my love afar.

---

## 15

I must go where my love resides;  
 to the Beloved speed!  
 There I shall give thee sandal-wood  
 and thou shalt no more feed  
 On salt-bush coarse, unfit for thee  
 or any worthless weed;  
 O hasten! there is urgent need  
 to reach while night doth last.

---



## 16

Arise and take a forward step—

be not an idler base;

The highway to my love is straight

and hath no winding ways...

Self-pity drop... a gallop raise

to bring us swift and soon.

## 17

Remember your ancestry, and

your forebear's noble breed;

Your stock is well-known near and far

and you do hold indeed;

Rare pedigree—and so we plead

show us some kindness now.

## 18

I bound him near some glorious tree

that he some buds might eat;

Ill-mannered camel, on the sly

still finds the salt-bush sweet.

Woe's me—I know not how to treat

Camel that so confounds.

## 19

I tried to saddle him, but e'en

unsaddled he'd not rise—

The way the herd is gone, he lies

and only gapes that side.

## 20

My camel, I will give thee reins

of gold, and trappings fine;

Not only buds of sandal wood

but thou on myrrh shalt dine;

If to the one Beloved mine

thou wilt bring me this night.

## 21

The camel did forget the herd,

nor e'en will salt-bush eat...

His blown-up hump has now become

his pampered passion's seat—

Alas, this callous, new conceit

he'll not drop unto death.

## 22

He goes not with the herd of late

and no more will he graze;

Since Cupid's arrow wounded him

he hugs a curious craze;

To his new love, with love-sick gaze

he crawls, defying death.

## 23

Now sits with herd, musk-branches eats;

yet calm remains his face

Ah me, apparently my camel

shows no outward trace.

'Here' he is with the world, but graze

with heart doth fondly 'there'.



24

He's not what he was yesterday  
 returning to the yard;  
 He never at the manger looks—  
 all food doth disregard;  
 Seems, poison creepers on the sword  
 he ate when with the herd.

---

25

With zest the camel browses now  
 on creepers such as made him yearn;  
 But owners, keepers of the field,  
 with shouts his sweet indulgence spurn;  
 The poor intruder, powerless  
 he grows from voices harsh and stern;  
 No answer finds he in return  
 and all his arduous madness flies.

---

26

Good animal, what you did put  
 your teeth in, finding them so sweet;  
 These baneful creepers if you eat  
 will bring you yet to grief and woe.

---

III

27

Torrents of rain and wind—camel  
 there obstinate he lies—  
 How shall I saddle him when rise  
 unsaddled he will not.

---

28

A solid braided rope construct,  
 with this your camel bind,  
 The fragrant creepers everywhere  
 all over grounds you'll find,  
 Once tasted, he will leave behind  
 all else, if he's not tied.

---

29

I fettered him with rope and chain,  
 but shackles were in vain;  
 He broke them all, and dragged them on  
 where creepers decked the plain—  
 O God, put sense and understanding  
 in this camel's brain  
 With mercy free him from this pain  
 to rise above this curse.

---

30

O rise, and to thy haven far  
 thy earthbound glances bear,  
 May be a happy welcome there  
 awaits thee from thy love.

---

31

No—go and shackle him, he will  
 run wild if left alone;  
 By tempting him to eat, he'll play  
 more pranks, but won't atone;  
 Load him and let him graze and groan  
 with heavy fetters bound.

---



## 32

Who laid a spell on you? and who  
 waylaid you, wished you ill?  
 Blinkers you wear—your soles rubbed off—  
 your kind not meet you will;  
 And round and round, as in a mill  
 you circumambulate.

## 33

My comely camel, won't you eat  
 the sandal wood and drink your fill  
 Of cleanest purest water, food  
 the finest you refuse it still—  
 What law gave you the tasty thrill  
 of salt-bush mere, above all else?

## 34

At last my camel every day  
 is browsing in that garden, where  
 Two tree-shoots are worth millions there  
 handful of leaves are thousands worth.

## 35

Two tree-shoots are worth millions . . nay  
 one leaf alone five lakhs will be—  
 Now to enrich his soul he eats,  
 the wholesome blossoms of this tree—  
 Here e'en a withered leaf we see  
 is many, many hundreds worth.

## 36

My lakhs-worth camel, that I bought  
 for hundreds, beautiful became  
 For any eye to see; don't blame  
 and say too dearly he was bought.

## 37

My invaluable camel, friend,  
 no praise is now for him too high;  
 His manger fill with cardamoms  
 then saddle him, and he will fly,  
 All distances he will defy,  
 and here and now the Loved-one reach.



## Sorath—IV (KING AND MINSTREL)

I

I

The minstrel came to Junagarh  
and here took out his lyre;  
With his entrancing melodies  
he did all hearts inspire;  
With his bewitching magic-strings  
he set whole town on fire—  
But palace-servants, princesses,  
were struck with anguish dire;  
“That Raja’s head was bard’s desire,  
lute spoke in accents clear.”

2

The bard at though a living string  
played with humility;  
The Raja in his palace fine,  
to hear him did agree;  
He mercifully called him in,  
and met him graciously—  
Then prince and bard, one harmony,  
one single ‘self’ became!

3

“I travelled many foreign lands,  
and have arrived today;  
Poor minstrel I, no treasures crave  
but for your life I pray—  
To win this favour, let me play,  
Oh Sire, the time is short.—

4

“Leaving all other doors, O king  
I wandered to your door!  
Blest Sorath’s husband, see my need  
a beggar doth implore,  
His empty apron fill once more  
and happiness restore!”

5

The king sat on his glistening dais,  
the bard below him played;  
The faintest note of music sweet  
up to the Raja sped—  
To private folks that could not come  
the minstrel too was led;—  
Fine horses were produced, rare gems,  
before the bard were spread,  
Who said: “not wealth like this, but head  
of Raja do I claim!”

6

No jewels can the minstrel please  
no wealth, no property—  
From riches and from great rewards  
so far away is he!  
His only wish is, near to be  
the crown of this wreath



## 7

Prince said: "I'll gladly sacrifice  
My head for thee O Bard,  
Although this is a small reward  
For all thy music's worth..."

## 8

"Were I to own a hundred heads  
And weigh them with thy strings—  
Behold the scale, how down it swings  
On side of strings divine!"

## 9

"O Friend, my head is only bone;  
An empty, empty bone—  
If thousand heads my neck would own  
I'll cut them all for thee!"

## 10

The strings, the dagger and the neck  
were reconciled all three—  
King said: "nought is so lovely than  
your wish to come to me,  
My head you craved....most heartily  
I do thank God for that...."

## 11

"But singer, it astounded me,  
That while you played your strain,  
How could its sweetness you survive  
And could alive remain?  
Last night, my being all in twain  
was by your music cut."

## 11

## 12

The flower of Girnar is plucked;  
The town is plunged in mourn and pain,  
Hundreds like Sorath stand and raise  
Their lamentations all in vain—  
The minstrel, holding lock, receives  
The prince's head adorned again—  
While virgins chant the sad refrain;  
"Last night the Raja passed away"

## 13

Sorath is dead; and all is peace—  
Ruler removed his tents—  
There are no singings and no shows,  
no tuneful elements.—  
And after this, artist presents  
The head again to king!

## 14

Sorath is dead, and all is peace—  
Raja pitches his tents;  
Music is heard again....the show  
goes on with merriments—  
Echo sounds song's sweet sentiments....  
Behold, the happy king!



# Asa—V

## (HOPE)

1

In Infinitude I toss,

1

O guide no bound perceive mine eyes  
Tortuous beauty of the Loved,

Has no limit, has no size—

Here intensive longing lies,

There the Loved-ones do not care!

2

Cursed be duality, Beloved,

From 'Self' do shelter me—

O, hold the 'I' near thee,

But thou canst reach 'thyself', O master.

3

But thou canst reach 'thyself' master;

Nothing but Beauty is;

O doubter, couldst thou doubt dismiss,

There's no Idea then left.—

4

Beloved, hold the 'I' near thee;

All self concern I've cast from me;

Protector mine, with duality

I wasted far too many days!

5

That is real dualism, when

Non-dualist yourself you call;

Be shorn of separateness, and

'Ego' let not thy soul enthral;

For 'this', doth not exist at all;

And 'that' not known is without 'this'.

6

'That' is not known without 'this', and

From 'this', 'that' doth not separate stand;

"Human my secret is, and I

Am his, that thou must understand"—

This voice did sound from end to end,

By secrets, and the knowing ones.

7

No one who loaded is with 'Self';

The other side will see,

For God is One, and Oneness loves;

So spurn duality;

And all thy anxious tears "to be",

Shed at altar of unity.

8

The servant too has no beginning,

And no end shall see—

Who the Beloved found, shall be

Absorbed for ever there.



## 9

Everyone knows where he is  
 I know not where I stand;  
 Guides and books there many are,  
 And they are close at hand—  
 But I, do seek the distant land  
 Where 'yes' and 'no' are not.

## 10

'Yes' and 'no', still within reach  
 Of earthly idea are;  
 But beyond all vision far  
 Is the Beauty that I seek.

## 11

Sometime or other, beauteous forms  
 Will be overwhelming thee;  
 But falcon of Reality,  
 Let not heedlessly escape.

## 12

The sensuous beauty thrashed me so  
 As carders cotton beat;  
 And now my hands are obsolete,  
 My body's paralysed.

## 13

Confound thy senses, and renounce  
 Thy 'Self' . . . Him — knowing be;  
 To recognize the Loved-one, drop  
 Thy personality;  
 And then coarse multiplicity  
 With unity destroy.—

## 11

The Loved-one bound me—

Threw me into waters deep;

And said: "Now dry do keep,  
 And getting wet avoid."

## 15

One that is into water thrown  
 From getting wet, how could be free?  
 Enlightened one, this mystery  
 How I might solve it, say.—

## 16

"Rely on contemplation, but  
 Of law neither neglectful be . . .  
 Your heart get used to Reality  
 Which is your Destiny to see;  
 Be resolute, and verily  
 You'll be immune from getting wet."

## 17

Ah, Reality broke my  
 Existence, so that I;  
 Can no more breathe without it,  
 In its presence high,  
 My soul suffused doth lie,  
 Exclusive of all else.—



18

Be silent—do not move your lips;  
 Your eyes do close, your hearing stay . . .  
 Drink not your fill, and at your meals  
 When still half hungry, turn away—  
 And then a glimpse enjoy you may  
 Of image that your mind's depth holds.—

19

Would of the august secret  
 I divulge one whit—  
 Trees would burn up,—unfit  
 For growth all earth would be.—

III

20

Let your eyes an offering be  
 For Loved-one ere you break your fast;  
 Sumptuous dishes seventy  
 You'll get by seeing Loved-ones face.—

21

If my eyes at rise for other  
 Sight than the Beloved care—  
 From their sockets I will tear  
 My eyes as morsels for the crows.—

22

Facial phenomenalists  
 Do not try to see with those,  
 Longing gapings with those eyes  
 Never Loved-ones features shows—  
 Only when both eyes you close  
 The Beloved you will see.—

23

Dwell in mine eyes Beloved fair  
 That I can close them now;  
 No one may ever see you there  
 And I nought else shall see.—

24

Acquire eyes that able are  
 to visualize Beloved's face;  
 Not then at any other gaze  
 Loved-ones are very sensitive.—

25

About dead Elephant amongst  
 the blind arose parley—  
 They handled it all over, but  
 Blind eyes could nought convey—  
 Only the ones with 'seeing' eyes  
 Decisive word can say—  
 The 'Seers' only can display  
 The genuine truth of things.—

26

The sense of wonder doth not dwell  
 Within the vulgar mind—  
 Secret of love to trace and find  
 Is no task for the blind.—

27

For whom so anxiously we pine,  
 We ourselves are those;  
 O doubt, be gone with all your woes  
 For Loved-ones we have found.—



28

Eyes weep and yet rejoice each day  
to look and to adore —  
The more they see loved-one, the more  
drunk they with love do get.

29

The more I prohibited eyes  
to look, the more they longed;  
They crossed the sleeping world, to find  
loved-one at any price—  
They killed me ah . . . but in this wise  
peace for themselves secured.—

30

Relationship with the 'visible',  
In no case do desire—  
Why not you for the real enquire  
and set out, seeking that?

31

Hear, and take note, that you yourself  
are 'barrier', and what is  
Between the union and its bliss  
Is nothing but yourself.

32

The love wants that love's secret  
alone his own shall be;—  
But eyes that flow continuously  
and sinking heart; . . . betray.—

IV

33

Corrupt ones can corrupt, whose love  
Is very weak, indeed—  
But whom love has consumed, succeed  
they can't for he the vile one slew.—

34

When praying, think not of yourself,  
Or prayers are in vain;  
All thinking of yourself restrain  
Drop self, and then do pray.—

35

You profess to be a 'faithful'  
Holy maxims you recite . . .  
But your heart deceit is hiding  
Duality—satanic spite—  
Faithful outward, you delight  
in idolat'ries inside.—

36

Seek not the form of one that your  
'Beloved' you do call,  
As conversation not at all  
can happen face to face.—

37

Converse you hold when cross you are  
Can never loved-one reach  
Some mischief monger longs to mar  
your heart, and spoil your love.



38

For to be cross is not the way;  
 two stones, can they unite?  
 'tis love that doth the cosmos sway—  
 through love alone it lives.—

39

Each claims to be on right path here;  
 But I have lost myself—

Desiring and acquiring are

So very, very near—

I set my mind on distant sphere

where 'yes' and 'no' are not.

40

Demerits world decries, loved—one  
 at so-called merits cross would be—  
 My deeds, I mentioned with my tongue  
 now all undone in dust I see.—

Then I discounted all my deeds,

which once I thought were charity.

An embassage I sent of shame;

Regrets and deep humility,

But oh.... my love made up with me  
 only when 'I' had disappeared.—

41

Whose body is a rosary,

the mind a bead, a harp the heart.

Love-strings are playing there the theme  
 of unity in every part;

The nerves do chant: "There's none like thee;

the 'One' and only one thou art.—

E'en sleeping beauty they impart,  
 their very sleep their worship is!

## Pirbhati—VI

## (SONG OF DAWN)

I

These are not ways you knew before  
 thy fiddle hanging on the peg,  
 And lovely dawn, as if it were  
 your enemy, so to ignore;  
 'Musician' call yourself no more  
 if to adore you thus forget,—

2

How fast you sleep! in pillows put  
 your face and weep with sorrow;  
 May be your violin lies tomorrow  
 forsaken on the ground.

3

The true musician has no peace;  
 nowhere for long he tarries—  
 On shoulder-strap his violin carries  
 and asks the way to wastes.

4

Confounded do you roam. O say  
 where were you yesterday?  
 My minstrel, now no longer loll,  
 but leave your listless way—  
 Go to the king's door, beg and pray  
 for things of genuine worth!

67



## 5

The king is giving secretly  
 gifts to ungifted ones;  
 If this those artists were to hear  
 they never would agree,  
 Their fiddles instantaneously  
 to smithereens would reduce!

## 6

So many minstrels, of what use  
 is all the craft they ply?  
 What servant deems so precious, may  
 be sin in master's eye—  
 Alchemy thou, and brazen I  
 thy look turns me to gold!

## 7

Bestowal is not due to caste,  
 whoever works, obtains,  
 At childish ways of innocence  
 forbearance king maintains;  
 Who one night at his court remains  
 shall e'er be free from pains!

## 8

It is the Givers great reproach,  
 against musicians vain;  
 "Why do you beg at other doors  
 and mine do not approach  
 Hence harm and hardship do encroach  
 upon their happiness.

## 9

The only Giver thou, and we  
 the humble beggars are;  
 Rain seasons have . . . Thy bounty's rain  
 doth pour eternally;  
 A visitation sweet, from thee  
 exalts, though soiled I be!

## 10

The morning star has risen . . . Oh  
 arise, adore thy master,  
 He swiftly turns away; doth know  
 minds of musicians all!

I follow night a most ready  
 dogie & throw my bestowal  
 "mudhi mudhi" will you say,  
 "Food has no taste for dogs, since  
 it left them with a bitter taste."

From human beings they beg not,  
 "no gift will be for them if they waste;  
 "I cannot live without them,"  
 "I cannot live without them,"  
 "I cannot live without them,"

No bowls they carry, nor to ask  
 food houses they do care;  
 "I cannot live without them,"  
 "I cannot live without them,"  
 "I cannot live without them,"



## Ramkali—VII (YOGIS)

### I

The glorious yogis in this world,  
some 'Fire' bring, some 'Light'—  
Who kindle themselves to 'ignite',  
"I cannot live without them"!

### 2

I on a festal bed did sleep,  
then from a sigh woke I,  
Those who aroused me with a sigh  
"I cannot live without them".

### 3

The music of renouncing ones  
great 'wealth' for me is this  
They have no need of words; nor speech  
their way and fashion is  
Ah, those that have 'become', I wis,  
"I cannot live without them"—

### 4

O nothing with themselves they take,  
with 'Self' they parted company—  
And those in whom such traits I see,  
"I cannot live without them"!

### II

### 5

With hunger yogis pack their bags  
preparing for a revelry....  
By tempting foods, they are not moved,  
and out they pour so lustily  
The 'thirst' to drink; their minds they flog  
until like beaten flax they be....  
So through long wastes they wade, to see  
at last fertility and life!

### 6

Food has no charm for yogis, since  
it left them with a bitter taste;  
From human beings they beg not;  
their call for help is in the waste;  
They chose poverty, and embraced  
sorrow with reverence sincere!

### 7

No bowls they carry, nor to ask  
from houses they do care;  
God-loving, oh so far away  
from human-doors they fare.  
No law they need, within they bear  
a court of justice pure!



## 8

They sleep at sunset, and again  
 at midnight rise, God-lovers these—  
 Their faces only wash with dust . . .  
 When dawn approaches then one sees  
 them lie by road-side ill at ease;  
 that they are 'Yogis', ne'er they tell.

## 9

These God-lovers, they do unfold  
 humility within their eyes—  
 They have no fathers, mothers, castes,  
 no pedigrees, no ties untold;  
 God is their One relationship  
 that they within their pure souls hold;  
 Of all the treasures manifold  
 a loin-cloth all their savings is.

## 10

And when their loin-cloth they have bound  
 ablutions more they do not need . . .  
 They too had heard the holy call,  
 Before Islam that did sound  
 All ties they severed, and they found  
 at last the guide they wished to meet.

## 11

The selfless ones you know by this,  
 that no desire they do bear;  
 Their sign the non-dependence is,  
 and freedom from relationship.

## 12

Whose heads bent on their knees must be,  
 their beings integrated are;  
 Their hearts like compass do return  
 to the Divine perpetually—  
 Their bodies they made dust, their forms  
 divested are by 'Reality';  
 From sin's account-giving all free,  
 are those whose state 'Direction' is!

## 13

This night they will with you remain,  
 tomorrow they will wend their way;  
 A longing for the patient ones  
 in every of your veins retain;  
 For, only fate will bring again  
 this kind of yogis to your door.

## 14

They will abide with you today,  
 tomorrow they will disappear—  
 On yogis feast, and so enrich  
 your soul, before they go away . . .  
 Oh seek their feet, or else you may  
 pine vainly after they are gone.



## 15

Before they leave your homely door,  
 with them a heart-to-heart talk have;  
 And sacrifice yourself on them  
 ten times during the day, or more—  
 As soon they leave for Hingalore,  
 then only fate can bring them back!

## 16

God-seeker's voice today I miss,  
 the courtyard now is desolute;  
 The sight of empty places here,  
 Kills me, so tortuous it is—  
 Who to the soul gave life and bliss,  
 the selfless ones, departed are!

## 17

Today the yogis disappeared,  
 remembering them, I wept whole night  
 Those whom I searched and so revered,  
 are vanished never to return . .

## 18

As men are hunting after food,  
 would they journey's direction ask;  
 E'en creeping, they in holy mood  
 the track would find, and end all woo.

## Ramkali—VII

## 19

And as for bread some chase, were they  
 in self-same manner seek for God  
 They'd drag themselves to find the way,  
 and their sorrows then would end!

## 20

What feast is for the vulgar, know  
 sweet hunger that for yogis is;  
 They love to keep the fast and go  
 ne'er near where feasts they see.

## 21

The yogis that are favouring still  
 delicious morsels, garments fine;  
 To get near God they never will  
 but far away from Him they dwell.

## 22

The eyes of yogis never sleep,  
 as always wet they are . . .  
 They wake and weep and so they keep  
 sleep at a distance far!

## 23

Alas! correctly you don't hear  
 with ears appended to your head—  
 The 'Message' you should hear instead  
 with ears that are within you placed.



## 24

In asinine ears do not trust,  
 dispose of them without delay;  
 Purchase such ears with which you may  
 hear clearly the Beloved's tale! —

## IV

## 25

Purpose that made them yogis,  
 so long that's not attained,  
 So long renouncers' life constrained  
 To tears and longing is. —

## 26

They never laugh, nor do they feast—  
 With no man do converse—  
 In depths profound they do immerse  
 'These' are the mystery! —

## 27

Where there's no height, no heaven,  
 And of the earth no trace;  
 Where moon doth never rise, nor sun  
 Doth ever show his face;  
 There yogis see their limit,  
 And see their resting place—  
 Their clues reach far, till now their gaze  
 Found in negation Reality! —

## Khahori—VIII

## (WANDERING ASCETICS)

## I

## I

Traversing far off realms, O friends  
 Khahoris have returned at last;  
 Their feet covered with dust... what lands  
 it came from—oh, how do I know. —

## 2

On wild growths hill-ascetics feed,  
 they seek the land ne'er known or heard—  
 Upon the dusty, stony grounds  
 they lay their flanks when rest they need;  
 To seek the light they do proceed  
 and seek it from infinity. —

## 3

The hill-ascetics I did see,  
 those who do not in houses dwell;  
 In biting wind they weep like rain  
 with longing for Divinity—  
 With sorrow they keep company,  
 and live on sorrow day and night. —



## 4

Old ragged ropes for shoes they wear;  
 their faces are dried up, and wan—  
 Oh, at that land they had a peep  
 that learned ones could see no-where  
 Secretive ones, have secrets rare  
 of regions that still further lie.—

## 5

Their arms hold water-bags all dry—  
 and on their feet ropes old and torn;  
 Eyes pouring rain . . . O passer-by  
 Ascetics such did e'er you meet!

## II

## 6

The load of truth cannot be borne  
 upon the head, I fear,  
 And deaf you have to be, the call  
 of Reality to hear.—  
 Make yourself blind, so that the dear  
 Beloved you may see.—

## 7

How beautiful is darkest night  
 in which you lose world's way—  
 Your greed for this and that, —O quite  
 forgotten it will be.

## 8

The common road do not go near;  
 but walk where 'they' walk not;  
 Cross over then by longing mere  
 and nothing take with thee.—

## 9

Wanderers need no conveyance, no!  
 for horses do not care—  
 Although their minds are set on  
 destination far and fair;  
 In wastes search food . . . torn rags they wear,  
 and that their sign-mark is.

## 10

I saw the wand'ers that a peep  
 at the Beloved had;  
 One night I in their place did stay  
 their company to keep.  
 To know them, is in drowning deep  
 to have a safety raft.

## II

Dust-covered they do walk their way,  
 and mix themselves with clay;  
 No secrets tell to stupid folk,  
 nor gossip or delay;  
 Some secret of the Loved—One they  
 bear in their heart all-time.



## 12

Knowledge hides snakes, and many find  
folly as honey sweet,

Who passed them both . . . left both behind  
he found the 'Reality'.

## III

## 13

Those who had lost their way were with  
a deep emotion stirred

Those seers in the waste stood blind  
and nothing more they heard—

Their ears were closed—like dumb they walked  
as if their minds were blurred..

Their only sorrow separation was  
which they incurred—

All they gave up for 'Lahut', but  
for this they hungered—

Asleep . . . awake . . . longing was spurred  
but never was alleyed.

## 14

The spot where One Beloved dwells  
how happy 't is, how sweet—

Turn off from places where you meet  
all the inhuman crowds.

## 15

Those who the bare hills came to know  
no more for harvests cared—

To Ganjo-hills they longed to go  
Lahutis to become.

## 16

Those who the bare hills came to know  
forthwith all books did close . . .

Their sleep had gone, for Ganjo-hills  
their longing hearts did glow..

They yearned Lahutis to become  
when dust from hills did blow.—

From smell of hills left worldly show  
Lahutis to become.

## 17

See where the bird can never fly;  
a tiny fire twinkles there—

Who could have kindled it so high  
except the wandering, homeless kind:

## 18

Restless Khahoris did destroy

their bodies in a holy mood  
And so their spirit gained the food

they had wished to obtain.

## 19

Wand'ers had girded up their loins . .

on heights they one with dust became,  
No they at last had reached, their aim

through sorrow mountains top had found.



## Purab—IX

(EAST)

I

I

Dear crow, after obeisance fall  
at the Beloved's feet—

Message I give thee, don't forget  
in transit, I entreat,

I beg in God's name secretly  
my message do repeat;

My words correctly and complete  
convey just as I say.

2

Come flying my dear crow, bring news  
back from the other side;

Sit down, a note of union strike,  
and all in me confide . . .

My loved-ones that seem to abide  
so far away, bring here.

3

From loved-ones, there in foreign lands  
bring news, and not delay—

Thy feathers I will cover with  
a wealth of gold-array—

Circle above his house, convey  
my message to my love.

## Purab—IX

4

Oh! crow, I'll tear my heart from this  
my breast with my own hands;  
You peck at it before my love,  
that dwells in foreign lands;  
May be he says: "there are no friends  
that dare such sacrifice."

5

The crow is back, and sitting now  
On yonder twig, quite near;—  
He came last night, and greetings sweet  
Brought from my precious dear—  
Stop spinning sisters! that I hear  
All what Beloved said.—

6

The crow brought happy news for me,  
From the Beloved mine;  
My wishes all have been fulfilled,  
No more I need repine—  
My life is joy, powers divine  
Have fruitful made my prayers.

7

A dog, a crow from loved-one's side  
Will so delight mine eyes!  
On them my 'Self' I'll sacrifice  
A hundred times a day.



## 12

On high-way they already are,  
To East, far East they roam—  
And they have sacrificed this home  
To build the future one.

## 13

The East has killed me, . . . none I find  
To whom I can complain;  
Advising world, and guiding it,  
I lost myself my mind—  
I made love to the higher kind  
Who were not likes of mine.

## 14

You comfort seek, and call yourself  
'Sami', yet are not trained;  
At journey's start exhausted grew,  
And more and more complained—  
You had not even found a guide, . . .  
To be consummate, so you feigned—  
Your soul should be to 'Sami' chained  
With 'Him' identified for aye.

## 15

To keep your greedy body fit,  
You beg for grains pretentiously,  
May be that you your ears have slit  
Palate to please with luxuries.

## Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif

## 8

Not make that crow a messenger  
That doth for carrion search!  
Will he deliver messages  
Or heed his stomach's urge?  
What message carry will that scourge  
Whose speech is: "Caw, caw, caw?"

## 11

## 9

In longing for my loved-one I  
Do rove around all day;  
Hoping he'll raise his eyes, and may  
Sweet recognition grant.

## 10

My comfort all is from those eyes,  
That smilingly they raise;  
Loved-one's smiles have relieved my woe  
And all my sorrow flies. . . .  
World thinks their emaciation lies  
In hunger, but from sorrow 'tis.

## 11

At mid-night Eastern Yogis closed  
Their house. . . . I failed to hear  
Their soul-converse, when gradually  
Dawn's pale lights did appear.—  
Strange yogis, whose detachment here  
E'en by compassion is not marred.



## Bilawal—X

### (THE TUNE OF LIFE)

#### I

Believe in word of invitation  
of the Giver kind;  
Just rinse your mouth, and you will find  
that food you will receive.

#### 2

Drive vulgar crowds out of the house,  
peace with the sovereign make—  
From that door then on favours browse  
receiving gifts each day.

#### 3

Don't long for wine of paradise,  
cross over, nearer still—  
Between you and the Union lie  
rewards, . . . this do realise!  
Sama's presence to find, arise!  
your wishes to fulfil.

#### 4

Sama, the crown is on your head  
else many leaders be—  
Oh, from your treasure house, such thousands  
beg the priceless bread,  
And bounty rich for them is spread  
according to their bowls!

#### 5

The kettle drums break one and all,  
all hollow are inside  
no one but on Hashmi call  
The door of Hashmi seek.

#### 6

One who upholds those in despair,  
helps those who seek refuge;  
This prop of humble ones, shirks not  
when millions crave his care . .  
Against all chieftains stand . . but there  
the smiling one they spy!—

#### 7

Stop not at every watering place  
but seek the deep, full lake;  
Head of the realm if you can reach  
there wait wealth and solace;  
The one who made poor rich, only  
his turban try to trace,  
Tarnish of hundreds he'll erase,  
when head he lifts and speaks!

#### 8

All credit due to Jakhro is,  
others commands obey  
This favourite's station, ah, where  
it be, no one can say;  
From what he fashioned was, that clay  
was just enough for him.



## 9

Jakhro worthy is, and the rest  
but name of 'king' do bear;  
As Jakhro was produced, others  
that way no fashioned were;  
Clay needed for his make so rare  
for him was just enough.

## 10

The leader's messages I store  
so deep within my heart  
Of other doors I think no more  
Since Jakhro I have seen!

## 11

No one like Jakhro I can see  
On earth where'er I gaze,  
The leader of all leaders, of  
Exalted status he—  
Two bows' length, even less, his place  
is from divine glory;  
O Lord, greatly you favoured me  
by giving me this guide!

## 12

Oh Jakhro, may you ever live;  
Of you may I no evil hear—  
Solace to eyes and heart you give,  
their only sweet support, is you.

## 13

Oh leader, well your ways are known  
all over foreign lands;  
How many have you set on horse backs  
that had weary grown?  
You ask no faults of those who moan,  
But all you do accept!

## 14

He even gives in anger....lo,  
when pleased his bounty pours,  
Benevolence doth overflow  
in noble Jakhro's mind.

## 15

Don't punish the obedient ones;  
but head strong do destroy;  
Forget not 'Battle Great', no joy  
no gain give battles small.

## 16

Come to the Major Battle, though  
many small battles fight....  
And never cease to sweep away  
passion—worshipper's blight.—  
With the support of Hyder's light  
fight, and destroy the foe!



17

Jakhro adore! he who appeased  
 the hunger of the land—  
 Those who were trembling in their rags  
 in silken shawls now stand;  
 It was by noble Jakhro's hand  
 the needy ones were filled!

18

The moment I arrived my feet  
 were cooled, my thirst was quenched;  
 A desert walker water sweet  
 had found in scorching waste.—

19

Beneath whose shelter I do dwell  
 noble man, may he live!  
 The waters that wayfarers drink,  
 may never dry that well...  
 Oh smiling one! mine eyes excel  
 in comfort, seeing you.

III

20

Vagand has now returned again,  
 his efforts all were vain...  
 So gladly would he here remain  
 dress, food, bed to obtain!

21

Vagand has now returned again—  
 when all had got their share,  
 A beating from his wife he got,  
 nought else she gave him there!  
 And now with zest he doth declare  
 he'll e'er lie at my feet!

22

Ah... in the hope of breakfast fine  
 Vagand again is here;  
 He never more will leave this place,  
 nor will he leave his Pir—  
 Perfume of spring he smells—so dear  
 prospects of breakfast are!

23

In body he so shrivelled looks,  
 at eating he is great;  
 He smells... sweetness to cultivate  
 he begs master for scent—



## 24

Poor Vagand, now so dutiful  
 is always at the door;  
 He loves perfumes so much . . . therefore,  
 he rakes the horses' dung.

---

## 25

Vagand has now returned again,  
 returned a hell complete!  
 He says: "Pir's heaven, dirty ones  
 turns into roses sweet—  
 Keep near perfumes, to be replete  
 with clean, refreshing smells."

---

## Sarang—XI (RAIN SONG)

## I

Warm preparations are again  
 in progress everywhere;  
 Again the lightnings have begun  
 to leap with arduous flare;  
 Some towards Istanbul do dive,  
 some to the West repair;  
 Some over China glitter, some  
 of Samerquand take care;  
 Some wander to Byzantium, Kabul,  
 some to Kandhar fare;  
 Some lie on Delhi, Deccan, some  
 reach Ginnar, thundering there  
 And greens on Bikanir pour those  
 that jump from Jesalmare  
 Some Bhuj have soaked, others descent  
 on Dhat with gentle air . . .  
 Those crossing Umerkote have made  
 the fields fertile and fair . . .  
 O God, may ever you on Sind  
 bestow abundance rare;  
 Beloved! all the world let share  
 thy grace, and fruitful be.

---



## II

## 2

O see, the low'ring, sombre skies!  
 the cum'ulous clouds have poured  
 Their big-dropped showers; now take  
 your herds, prepare, and rise;  
 Leave lower grounds, to uplands go  
 and practise old device,  
 Take your provisions and supplies....  
 despair not of God's grace.

## 3

Today too from the northern side  
 the rain-quails notes reach here!  
 The ploughers ploughshares ready make  
 herdsmen are full of cheer..  
 Today too nature doth appear  
 in rich array of rain!

## 4

Today too there are hopes of rain,  
 the clouds are dark and low—  
 O friends, with monsoons, longing for  
 the loved one comes again—  
 I hope the rain will water well  
 the parched and longing plain...  
 Beloved come! my life sustain,  
 all seasons then feel spring.

## 5

Man, deer and buffaloes do pant  
 for rain, ducks hope for clouds;  
 A far as thought in supplication  
 sounds the rain-quail's chant;  
 At sea, each morn the oysters beg  
 that skies the rain may grant—  
 Give lots of rain! with joy rampant  
 the herdsmen then become.

## 6

The rain pours on the desert-sands  
 on hills and vales around;  
 At early dawn we, rise to hear,  
 the churns soft, humming sound—  
 The hands are full of butter, wives  
 with merriment abound—  
 Each buffalo for milking brought  
 athwart the grassy ground;  
 In thatches here we never found  
 mistress and maid so glad!

## 7

The cloud, with colours rich and bright  
 paints towers in the skies—  
 It brought the violins, zitherns, flutes,  
 tambors that give delight....  
 While jar on jar rain-sprite at night  
 pours into Padam lake....



## 8

Season's orchestra's in full swing,  
 fresh showers ease the mind;  
 On mountain-side so green with grass;  
 cattle abundance find;  
 Gay herdsmen's wives about their necks  
 of blossoms garlands wind;—  
 Cucumbers, mushrooms, vegetables  
 food of every kind;  
 Lord! days of dearth let lie behind,  
 ne'er let them reach the earth.—

## 9

Season's orchestra's in full swing,  
 rain-quails pipe tenderly;  
 Peasants repair their ploughs, herdsmen  
 rejoice with ecstasy—  
 My friend in perfect form . . . O see  
 predicts a downpour great!

## 10

Season's orchestra's in full swing,  
 clouds move up, near and far;  
 The grain is cheap, and brimful now  
 of butter is each jar—  
 Rust that my heedless heart did mar,  
 this God-reminder cleansed.

## II

Cloud was commanded: 'Rain must come',  
 and cloud obeyed so fain—  
 Lightnings arrived, rain pattered, poured,  
 came to remain and reign;  
 The hoarder who for dearness hoped  
 now wrings his hands in vain,  
 Five multiplied to fifteen; so  
 the page has turned again.  
 The profiteer may disappear  
 and cause no longer pain . . .  
 The kine-herds sit together now,  
 relating tales of rain—  
 O God, who happiness would gain,  
 must on thy grace rely!

## III

## 12

O, rain, were lessons you to take  
 from my poor, pouring eyes,  
 Then night and day, in cloudy guise  
 your drizzle would not stop!



## 13

Mists do not leave mine eyes, if clouds  
are there or not, mists stay;

Remembering Loved one, o'er my cheeks  
my tears flow night and day...

Oh, those whose loves are far away  
may never cease to weep.—

## 14

Though inside all is overcast,  
outside from every cloud is free....

Lightnings mature within, in whom

Love doth reside eternally....

Their eyes shall never rainless be  
in whom thought of 'Beloved' reigns.

## Suriraag—XII

### (SAILING)

## 1

## 1

O friend, I often did beseech  
an old boat do not have;  
With worn out sails, the heavy wave  
the vessel will not stand.

## 2

Thy boat oil daily, mend its leaks,  
and keep in mind, one day

The vessel has to sail away,  
a voyage long to make!

## 3

With riggings furnish it, and then  
take it to depth remotest,  
So that from every harm thy boat  
secure and safe may be.

## 4

Acquire you such merchandise  
which time corrupteth not,  
That when you sell to far off lands  
no loss may be thy lot—  
In goods deal only which allot  
to thee mainstay secure.



## 5

Those who with merchandise of Truth  
a lasting bargain made;

"You will get your reward", to them  
these tidings are conveyed—

Those were they whom the Powers led  
through mighty ocean's swell.

---

## 6

To ocean dedicate yourself

where endless waters flow;

Thousands of pearls and precious things  
its current holds below—

An ounce of such wealth will bestow,  
on you a fortune rare.

---

## 7

No wave the path of those can stay  
who worship the sublime;

Effect of their repentance makes  
them safely swim away;

Propped by 'Reliance absolute'  
they pass wild current's sway,  
By 'Perfect Sailor' met were they  
in mid-current, as guide!

---

## 8

With precious ware of 'service great'  
their vessels they did lade;

'Real Recognition's' pearls they won  
whose worth can never fade;

'Restraint from sin and evil', oh—  
that bargain too they made;

May with their blessings I evade  
perils, when crossing sea!

---

## 9

So difficult it is to fare  
on the path to 'Divine';

So difficult, so very hard  
the way, for those who dare—

And even those who know the land  
confusion meets them there;

Its violent cross-current to bear  
enter with love intense!—

---

## 11

## 10

Goods there were heaps and manifold,  
traders forgetful were;

Some came in good time and purchased  
all that the stores did hold—

Some loitered, and all things were sold  
when they had come to buy.

---



## II

The water through the boat did seep,  
and precious goods were spoiled;  
With spots and smudges some were soiled  
and some with rust got black.

---

## 12

You came and had at shores a peep,  
that you had heard about.—  
When everyone had gone to rest,  
you also went to sleep;  
And so you brought the boat headlong  
to whirlpools wild and deep—  
The wreck that is too worn and old  
may God from sinking keep—  
The wretched ones inside rely  
on you, they fret and weep,  
Arise and help! their praises reap  
and bring them safe to port!

---

## 13

Boatman, upon the raging sea  
both ways you cannot have;  
Whole nights you sleep, resting your back  
on rudder carelessly—  
But there across at morn they'll be  
and of your doings ask!

---

## 14

Sleep not O helmsman! shun your cot,  
when danger lurks ahead;  
The shore is foaming like the curd  
that foams in churning pot....  
O helmsman, sleep befits you not  
in such an awful state!

---

## 15

The divers met the waves that foamed  
with hidden treachery—  
They battled with the eddies deep,  
their fight was grim and dree;  
Yet, 't was they who sought the sea,  
and brought the lovely pearls.

---

## 16

Where'er a pearl exists, behold!  
the thieves their haunts will have,  
And him awaits fortune untold  
who guards the pearl from thieves.

---

## III

## 17

Not offer precious stones to those  
who know not gold from brass;  
To true jewellers in exchange  
your jewels you may pass;  
Ah, those who deal in gold, the mass  
of metals base they spurn.

---



## 18

But gold-dealers have gone... Oh gold  
 't were best you too should go—  
 Since no one here your worth doth know  
 they'll mix you up with brass.

---

## 19

The glass-beads are in fashion now  
 real pearls no more appeal....  
 My tunic's full of Truth, I feel  
 ashamed to offer it.

---

## 20

The lapidaries that cut gems,  
 since long from there they fled;  
 And their successors do not know  
 'e'en how to deal with lead,  
 And smiths now pewter beat instead  
 where lapidaries worked!

---

## 21

I dealt in glass, and never made  
 purchase of any pearl;  
 All tinsel-stuff and leaden ware  
 and trash I bought instead;  
 But suddenly, I found, my trade  
 was placed with gold-experts!

---

## 22

With falsehoods I did pass my days;  
 divine commands I broke—  
 The vessel overflows with sin  
 and with my doings base;  
 Oh knower of the secret ways  
 thou know'st already all!

---

## 23

The lies that you had hugged, forsake!  
 approach the source divine  
 Drive from your heart chicanery,  
 to honest dealings take;  
 The Master liketh truth of heart  
 In mind love's fire wake,  
 Thus humbly do approach, and make  
 a bargain, fruitful, good.

---

## 24

O God! a bargain that is best,  
 I beg bestow on me;  
 The helpless one no power has,  
 but Master, turns to thee,  
 O Guide, without thy help no one  
 can reach his destiny—  
 Who faces high wave on the sea,  
 with mercy pick him up....

---



## IV

25

The maid unwarily  
     the gem in casket broke...  
 The gem when whole, its price  
     a lakh or two would be,  
 Now it is crushed... ah me,  
     'tis more than millions worth!

26

Those who kept up all night  
     to adore Glorious One;  
 Latif says: E'en their dust  
     became with honour dight;  
 Scores to their resting site  
     flock, homage there to pay.

## Samudi—XIII

## (MARINERS)

1

1

Lady, at moorings do remain;  
     and so prevent the mariners,  
 From plunging you in sudden pain  
     by setting sail all suddenly.

2

Lady, at moorings do reside,  
     and keep the fire in your heart;  
 Burn on, that mariners abide  
     with you, not leave you suddenly.

3

At moorings settle down, nor try  
     to take a rash and careless step,  
 Or else they will not wait, but will  
     at once to foreign regions hie,  
 You knew their home was ocean... why  
     did you not with them go?—

4

Anchor and chains lifted, they are  
     already far upon the way  
 Desolate are port and bazar  
     for mariners have sailed away.



## 5

When loved-ones did voyaging start,  
 I was in youth, my blossom-time,  
 Oh friend, my weeping could not hold  
 my merchant-love, he would depart;  
 On fire did he set my heart  
 and then did sail away.

## 6

They sailed away! leaving you here—  
 acons have passed and none came back,  
 Sorrow for vanished ones, alack  
 will surely kill you poor one!

## 7

They sailed along so very far,  
 Till to the mighty deep they got,  
 Where swell of ocean swept them off,  
 and swiftly down and down they shot,  
 Descending to the traceless spot  
 which is fathomlessness!

## 8

Ah me! a mixture of deep woe  
 are nuptial ties with mariners;  
 My body he on spikes laid low,  
 and then my merchant hoisted sail.

## 9

May you forget the trade you learnt—  
 —But yesterday I met you here  
 Today I see you disappear  
 sailing on ocean waves!

## 10

My love seems feeble, luckless fate;  
 They pushed the boat off ere I knew;  
 With sailors yesterday a bond  
 . I should have made, today's too late.  
 Why did I not throw myself straight  
 Into the boat, with hawsers bound?

## 11

I at the pier did stand when they  
 Their anchor lifted and set sail.  
 On God relying, night and day  
 I shall not cease for them to pray  
 My longing sighs my life shall sway  
 Till to my arms they do return!

## 12

## 12

On foot I cannot reach... they say  
 so far from me the ports do lie;  
 No fare in pinafore or purse  
 I possess for the trip to pay;  
 Oh ferry-man, so manage that  
 The dearly loved-one meet I may;  
 In anguish at thy door I stay  
 Each day beseeching thee with tears.



13

Alas! no one doth lift a hand—  
 no one will have them in the boat,  
 Without a fare, and at the shore  
 all day till sunset they did stand—  
 Then 'God Almighty help did send,  
 and to the landing place they got!

14

The wives of merchants, waiting there,  
 Did bring their offerings to the sea;  
 Bright lights they kindled everywhere—  
 And even musk to waters gave.

15

Ah..now the mast-flag is in sight,  
 Although the sails not yet they see..  
 And thrilled with infinite delight  
 Are those who loved-ones do expect.

16

The ploughers of the salty deep,  
 The waters sweet have entered now;  
 Their inmates bargained not for gold  
 But greater wealth they wished to reap.  
 The flourishing mariners, lo  
 Port of Ceylon for pearls did sweep,  
 And safely in the boat they keep  
 The treasures they in "Lanka" found.

17

Oh sisters, if to my homestead  
 My love would come, what joy for me—  
 Handfuls of pearls around his head  
 I'll turn, and then to others throw.

18

For those, for whom I sacrificed,  
 Did worship waters, kindle lights—  
 My hopes all have been realized,  
 My loved-ones have returned to me!

19

She kindled lights on land and sea  
 And pretty tufts to trees she tied  
 "Oh God I have great hope in Thee  
 My loved-one, back to me let come."

20

She who to sea no offerings makes,  
 And doth not kindle floating lights—  
 Is not in earnest, hath no stakes,  
 Beloved she will never meet.



## Kamod—XIV

(LOVE-DEPENDENT)

I

You noble are, I humble am  
the seat of demerits am I—  
Seeing your queens, O king, your eye  
turn not away from fisher-folk.

I

2

You noble are, I humble am  
scores of defects abide with me—  
When heaps of smelling fish you see,  
turn not away from fisher-folk.

3

You are king, master of the land  
and I sell fish, poor fisher-maid,  
Do not forsake me, for 't is said  
that I, oh king, belong to thee.

4

Those who do feed on smelling fish,  
and fish is all their property—  
The king, the noble king, O see!  
with them relationship has made—

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## Kamod—XIV

113

The basket full of smelling fish,  
and all the loaded herring-trays—  
Fishers, whose touch avoided is  
and such unpleasantness conveys  
The king stands in their thatch always  
and gently holds converse with them!

11

6

Now she no longer catches fish,  
nor cuts, cooks, cures as formerly;  
She neither holds the scales and weight,  
not fish-net in her hands we see—  
Now to the court-modes cleaveth she,  
such as befits a kingly house!

7

Her hands and feet, her face and form  
no more of fisher-maid remind—  
As there's a chief-string in the lute  
she's queen of all the queens combined;  
From the beginning all her ways  
were queenly, noble and refined,  
The king perceived it and did bind  
the regal bracclet on her wrist!



## 8

Fie upon maids of princely caste  
 who walk stiff-necked, so haughtily—  
 Praise to the daughter of the lake,  
 her true love to the king gave she..  
 Out of all royal ladies, he,  
 the pearl bestowed on fisher-maid.

## III

## 9

Court-ladies now adorn themselves,  
 to win king back with beauty spells—  
 But king midst fisher people dwells,  
 within his hand the fishing-net!

## 10

The fishing-net in hands of king,  
 and fisher-maid did rudder sway!  
 Upon the lake all yesterday  
 fish-hunting gay was going on!—

## II

“On deep, clear waters of the lake,  
 with my beloved now I sail,  
 Of my desires none did fail,  
 all are fulfilled, none went astray.”

## 12

Upon the waters transparent,  
 along the banks float lotus-flowers,  
 And all the lake rich fragrance showers  
 as sweet as musk when spring-winds blow.

## IV

## 13

Credit of raising fisher-maid  
 Belongs to Tamachi,  
 He took her in his carriage, and  
 a human-being he  
 Made out of her, . . . in Kienjhur, see!  
 All say this is the truth.

## 14

Of those before the ‘Jam’ was born  
 the fish-maid nothing knows,  
 They don’t attend ceremonies,  
 go not to weddings, nor to shows;  
 What hath lake-life to do with those?  
 they only know the head, the king.

## 15

None gave king birth, to no one birth  
 gave He—He’s generous, . . . alone—  
 The fisher women old and young,  
 as His relations He doth own;  
 He is not born, “He gives no birth” —  
 balance unique, to change unknown  
 Tamachi’s high eternal throne,  
 so great and oh, so glorious is!



## Sasui: Abri—XV

### (TRIBULATIONS)

#### I

Now or after, my destiny  
is my Beloved one—

The labour of poor one, O God  
let it in vain not be,

I beg for nothing, but to see  
my loved-one in this life.

#### 2

Sasui's heart breaks from pain's torment  
and rends all hearts around;

Immaculate Sasui, her eyes  
are e'er on Punhu bent;

Her virtuous mind on Beauty of  
the glorious One intent;

Faithful up to the last....all spent—  
the maid in mountains dies.

#### 3

Sasui, undone by longing, yet  
affects the longing more;

Drank deep of Punhu's company  
and yet for more doth fret;

Aye, still more thirsty they do get  
who drink draughts from this stream,

## Sasui: Abri—XV

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#### 4

Seeing the flood of Beauty, they  
who drank a sip from there  
It all the more increased their thirst;  
their longing and despair;  
Although they live in mid-stream ne'er  
this boundless thirst is quenched.

#### 5

Sasui, before you follow Punhu,  
feel your utter helplessness;  
Take naught for granted, attitude  
unservant like do not possess;  
Oh, with yourself take only love,  
and without 'Self' you must progress....  
Make no approach to Azazel,  
to save yourself from deep distress;  
Keep company with hopelessness  
so that you nearer come to hope.

#### 6

Do not rejoice in comfort, seeing  
sorrow do not fear..  
In sacrifice don't crush your own,  
nor houses new do rear;  
Dead one, don't die, in no case here  
try to maintain your life.



## II

7

Ah, those that are from longing free  
 how Kech can ever reach?  
 Such wishful hundreds did I see  
 that ere mid-way gave up.

8

Each doth express a wish, but none  
 ready for hunger is..  
 To walk is not for every one.  
 nor make a trip like this—  
 I take for company, I wis,  
 one who not loves the 'Self'.

9

I pledged my troth when innocent;  
 suspecting no torment;  
 Nor knew brothers in law would leave  
 with me longing, lament....  
 The longing one, on seeking bent  
 Must now through mountains roam

10

O sisters, when my troth I plighted  
 ignorant was I;  
 Or with my mountaineer's subjection  
 how could I comply?  
 A brief talk did my being tie  
 to Punhu for all life.

## II

Those, who do husbands own, return—  
 I'll not come without mine;  
 To search the deepest mountain depth  
 and turn each stone, I yearn,  
 To settle love's account I burn  
 with camel-riders there.

## III

12

Frail one, do never slow your pace  
 when seeing mountains high...  
 The threatening mountains do not fear,  
 and keep your love-ablaze;  
 And never give up hope to see  
 your loved-ones lovely face—  
 Don't seek him in a far-off place,  
 he's nearer than your eyes.

13

Those who took off from 'here' their mind  
 and fixed it 'there', they reached;  
 Beloved, Beauty, Truth to find  
 for them one step it was.



## 14

Kechis are speaking—now Sasui  
 you should become an ear;  
 The breath that comes from them, but silence  
 can distinguish here;  
 Sit silently, and only 'hear',  
 that fire you may acquire.

## 15

Now be an ear—the Kechis speak;  
 no word must come from thee;  
 And not an iota of your 'I'  
 should in their presence be....  
 Behold, the Kechis cut the tree  
 of being from the root.

## 16

Sometimes one should become an ear;  
 sometimes a mouth should turn—  
 Sometimes like knife one should appear  
 sometimes a lamb become.—

## IV

## 17

Your love is not where you surmise;  
 and where you think he be,  
 Walk not to mounts, the wood you have  
 to cross within you lies;  
 Your being ask for all advice  
 and strangers keep outside.

## 18

Sasui, within yourself you bear  
 what you are seeking so;  
 No one found ever anything  
 by walking here and there,—  
 As though he your own being were  
 so seek his whereabouts.

## 19

Why do you go to woods remote?  
 why not your love search here?  
 Believe, not hiding anywhere  
 is your beloved Hoat;  
 Be pure, gird up your loins, faithful  
 upon you loved—one dote  
 Look deep into yourself and note  
 Beloved's home is there.—

## 20

Not with your feet keep wandering  
 but with your heart do walk  
 A courier's job will never bring  
 you anywhere to Kech.

## V

## 21

While peeping in myself I was,..  
 I with my soul conversed;  
 No camel-man was there to chase,  
 all mountains had dispersed;  
 'Punhu' I had become... immersed  
 in woe, but 'Sasui' was.



## 22

I was deceived by my fancy—  
 or else Punhu myself I was;  
 I lost myself in presence of  
 the prince's noble majesty;  
 Unless you yourself loved—one see  
 No iota worldly knowledge helps.

## 23

Once you give up existence, know  
 you are near the unique—  
 Refuge seek in: "what'er I saw  
 God was in it", and lo  
 Then your Beloved cannot go  
 from you one minute mere.

## 24

Your love is in your lap, and yet  
 you ask: "where is he, where"?  
 O understand, he's in your soul  
 to see him wont you care?  
 No one to the Bazar will fare  
 Beloved there to find.

## 25

I hunted for my rider-swain;  
 vain was the search I made,  
 The clue of him I got was: "God  
 does everything pervade;  
 He Himself is in every blade  
 without Him nought exists."

## Sasui: Desi—XVI

## (THE NATIVE)

## 1

I careless was first part of night;  
 so morning brought despair—  
 For while I slept my rider-spouse  
 for travel did repair;  
 For my destruction to prepare  
 at mid-night they did leave.

## 2

O mountain, that does stand between  
 my love and me, thy threat is vain—  
 Had there a thousand mountains been  
 my longing would have crossed them all.

## 3

The sacred knot that love has tied  
 between Punhu and me....  
 Now in beauteous Bhamore to stay  
 Poison for me shall be...  
 Do not advise me sisters, to  
 return to home and glee;  
 Because my breath is property  
 of my beloved Hoat.



4

With longing I lay down, with eyes  
 awake and found no sleep;  
 But when at last I slept, he came  
 and then I could not rise—  
 Sisters I erred, for in what wise  
 is longing kin to sleep?

## Sasui: Kohiyari—XVII

### (THE MOUNTAIN PATH)

1

1

Careless one, drop this drowsiness;  
 no more for slumber seek—  
 O shameless one, drive sleep from eyes  
 and be no longer weak.—  
 So that you may not have to shriek  
 in mountains after him.—

2

Those who upon their couches lay,  
 with outstretched legs, alas....  
 The company did pass away,  
 leaving such sleeping ones.

3

Reproach comes to unlucky ones  
 who so much sleep desire;  
 Why after Punhu do enquire  
 who sleep from sunset on?

4

Hard-hearted mount, vain was my plea,  
 high-handed tyrant thou;  
 My being you sawed, as wood-cutters  
 do cut the helpless tree;  
 But for decree of Destiny  
 Oh, who would walk thy stones?



5

O mountain, when my love I meet;  
     your tortures I'll relate;  
 Your hideous shadow ghosts at dawn,  
     your winding way's deceit,  
 You did me not with kindness treat  
     but dimmed the loved-one's tracks.

6

O silent mountain, not a clue  
     you give me of my love—  
 But yesterday a camel-cade  
     in long row moved through you,  
 This dead one's spouse, did you not view  
     amongst the company?

7

O mountain, to the friend I'll bear  
     at once the great reproach;  
 That you to shreds the very soles  
     of my poor feet did tear;  
 That your soul is of pity bare  
     and ne'er any worth you know.

8

O mountain, hearts of sorrowing ones  
     you should console and soothe;  
 Instead of that, their feet you bruise—  
     you stony, callous one.

9

O mount, each day in sacrifice  
     I throw myself on you—  
 Because there are mysterious ties  
     'twixt you and my love's tale.

10

O mount, the helpless one in woe  
     now sits with you and weeps;  
 But never anyone lets know  
     the links twixt you and her.

11

O mountain, though you hot have grown  
     you cannot harm me now;  
 You may be made of hardest stone  
     my limbs are iron-made—  
 't is no one's fault, it is my own  
     my own strange destiny.

11

12

O Punhu do not leave me here  
     in mountains weird and dire—  
 I'll walk with you on foot, and fire  
     to Bhamore I will set.



## 13

Reflection of my Punhu, light  
it doth display and shade;  
I have to walk the chequered road....

O sec, the cloth is laid  
In soda-wash, and clean is made  
ere colours it receives.

## 14

Reflection of my Punhu is  
like cloud and flash, and I  
Follow this Prince and sob and sigh  
and weep without respite.

## 15

Reflection of my Punhu is  
the acme of all Bliss—  
For his sake my most luckless day  
for me comfort it is  
Calamity my Prince left, his  
sweetest gift for me.

## Sasui: M'adhuri—XVIII

## (THE HELPLESS)

## 1

Hast thou not heard a voice Sasui?  
or dost at random walk?  
Hundreds of Sasui's walked behind  
their lovers before thee—  
From start Baluchi progeny  
has no compassion learnt.

## 2

O grieving one; brush pain aside,  
and comforts do forget—  
Your eyes on Punhu's footprints set,  
that you may find him soon.

## 3

Hurt on the road denuded, greed,  
temptations do not keep—  
And those who are too fond of sleep,  
their tryst with loved-one miss.

## 4

Leave all your lovely robes behind,  
and nothing with you bring;  
One, burdened not with anything  
Keeps forefront on the way.



## 5

One that without a burden walks  
will soon the loved-one meet—  
But she has missed her union sweet  
who affects lovely wraps.

## 6

She who adorns herself, in vain  
waits for the meeting true;  
She is deprived like Leela, who  
sold her love for jewels.

## II

## 7

A thousand thorns do prick my feet;  
they cause me endless woe!  
Alas, my feet are torn, one toe  
meets not the other toe;  
And yet, with bare feet I will go  
to my beloved one.

## 8

With hands, feet, knees, and every breath  
Sasui you must proceed;  
Your guide will meet you at the stream  
and give you further lead;  
As long there's breath, place nought, indeed  
But Punhu in your heart.

## 9

I could not my Beloved meet  
and now you set, O sun!  
My message to the loved-one bring  
before my day is done;  
When you reach Kech say: "Helpless one  
is dying on the way."

## 10

I could not reach my loved-one, and  
my life's already past....  
Alas, the woeful one did waste  
her days declining fast—  
In old age now, her eyes are cast  
upon her Punhu rare.—

## II

Alas, I could not reach my love—  
already death appears....  
Beloved did not come, although  
I looked for him for years—  
Destroyed by separation's tears  
I destined am to die.—

## 12

Die and relieve, so that Beauty  
of loved-one leaves you never;  
Acceptable you'll be for ever,  
accepting this advice.



## 13

Die to be beautiful, life is  
hindrance twixt him and you,—  
Helpless one, boldly do pursue,  
give breath to find the friend.

## 14

Who die before death, never will  
destroyed by dying be.—  
Who live ere second life they see  
will live eternally.

## Sasui: Husaini—XIX

## (THE WAILINGS)

## 1

O look not back! nor hesitate,  
for sun declines in West—  
Thy pace do quicken, do not rest  
ere sunrise try to reach.

## 2

O sun, make it not hard for me,  
by setting very soon;  
The tracks of Punhu let me see  
ere I in mountains die.

## 3

A rain is pouring from my brow,  
hot perspiration's stream;  
What I thought love, revealed is now  
consuming fire flame.—

## 4

The day is burning, she doth move  
now swifter on her way;  
This Brahmin girl, an ancient love  
for the Baluchis has.



## 5

As long you live, aglow remain;  
 there's no way without fire;  
 In hot and cold, swift pace maintain  
 there is no time to rest.

## 6

On rising, thought of mountaineers  
 did overwhelm me there;  
 I shall leave Bhambore, nought endears  
 this Bhambore to my heart.

## 7

Sisters, for pleasures of Bhambore  
 the caravan I missed;  
 Therefore I now with sorrow sore  
 the mountains have to search.

## 8

Sisters, your freedom do secure  
 by leaving Bhambore now;  
 Our old comrades here did endure  
 much sorrow and much pain.

## 9

In Bhambore is the smoke of hell;  
 Sisters, from Bhambore part—  
 Sasui take thou the guide and start  
 early and not delay.—

## 10

Sisters, my heart is sorrow-clcft.  
 and wounded I do live...  
 Of loved-ones all, for whom I long  
 alas, I am bereft;  
 Can I forget those who have left  
 e'en now before my eyes?

## 11

Bhambore, the town of ugliness,  
 the noble prince adorned;  
 Lord of the mountains, from whole world  
 removed fear and distress,  
 Maids art of printing learnt, model  
 was Punhu's loveliness—  
 Unrivalled one, Bhambore did bless  
 and decent it became.—

## 12

The Bhambore that not walked behind  
 the Hoat, confounded got;  
 Unrivalled One, the town did not  
 recognize, walked like blind;  
 Those privileged were, who did find  
 his Beauty with their hearts.—

## 13

Who saw him with their hearts, did feel  
 to follow him at once;  
 When Punhu did himself conceal  
 e'en then they followed him.—



## 14

In hot and cold incessantly  
walk on, and do not wait;  
At fall of night you will not see  
the tracks of him you seek.

## 15

There was a time when princely I had  
my clothes to wash did choose;  
Now even camelmen refuse  
to take me with themselves.

## 16

My gown is at my shoulders torn;  
alas my head is bare—  
O sisters in your Bhamore fair  
what have I now to do?

## 11

## 17

From grief and woe she did obtain  
the lead, to walk the way;  
It was from guidance of the pain  
she Punhu found at last.—

## 18

A hundred comforts I will give  
and bargain too my head,  
If in exchange I may instead  
— a single sorrow get.

## 19

Sweet sorrow, do not you depart  
as went away my love....  
To none I may pour out my heart  
but you, since he has left.

## 20

Sorrows, joys' beauty constitute;  
joys without sorrows spurn;  
By virtue of such sorrow's mood  
my love comes to my arms

## 21

We walk in fellowship with 'Care'  
but keep the world at bay—  
When even very young we were,  
sorrow made home with us.

## 111

## 22

Those who are seeking for the friend,  
one day the friend will find;  
The seeking ones will at the end  
reach loved-ones domicile.—

## 23

No more alive...or dead...yet death  
I feel is claiming me....  
Beloved...I give up my breath  
in longing now for thee.—



24

Had you died yesterday, you'd met  
 your Punhu yesterday,  
 All hale-and-hearty, never yet  
 succeeded finding love.

---

25

As soon or late I death must see;  
 may I in mountains die . . .  
 Sisters, so that my death should be  
 on my Beloved's count.

---

26

Better in mountains cut and sore,  
 striving for Punhu, die—  
 That all the world for ever more  
 thy love shall glorify.—

---

27

She follows in pursuit, calls, cries—  
 but smiles when tracks she finds;  
 Who turns one step back when she dies  
 shall ne'er the loved-one see.—

---

28

As night advances, swifter grows  
 her step and swifter still . . .  
 Her innocent mind nothing knows  
 but the word: "rider-spouse".

---

29

Don't cease to call persistently;  
 keep calling, begging still—  
 Then riding-men may suddenly  
 relax, remembering thee.

---

30

To whate'er you in life adhere,  
 Links after death remain;  
 And those who cannot see Hoat here  
 How will they see him 'there'?

---



## Leela-XX

I

By jewels tempted, necklace bright  
 you craved, . . . so Satan scores did cheat  
 You lost your spouse through his deceit—  
 your era then of woe began.

2

The jewel is no jewel—nay,  
 nor necklace worth to tempt your heart  
 Its origin is clay and bits  
 of glass it doth betray;  
 Cursed trinket, in its fine array  
 made many from the loved-one part.

3

Pendant of sorrow was, what you  
 a necklace thought to be;  
 Your Lord decked your maid with grace  
 which he from you withdrew.  
 May no discord part lovers true  
 and union break in twain.—

140

## Leela-XX

141

4

By show she slipped. . . . and by conceit  
 she fell, shattered was she;  
 World came to her, called her a fool  
 reproaches she did meet.  
 They burnt her heart with scorn to death—  
 her downfall was complete.—  
 All her youth's blossoms, fragrant, sweet  
 dried up with in her heart.

5

Exalted amongst friends; I was  
 the wise one in the land;  
 Something upset the balance—and  
 now I must hang my head.

6

I was in Chanesar's domain  
 first lady, and at social feasts  
 First was I called, and always first,  
 until my heart grew vain;  
 He thrust me off. . . with shame and pain  
 now lowest in the land I am.

7

With Chanesar's affection let  
 no wanton maiden play;  
 No place for coquetry is this  
 I learnt to my regret—  
 His disapproval doth beget  
 sorrow for happy ones.



## 8

With zest, all lofty ones have decked  
 their necks with diamonds fine;  
 Hundred devices they employ  
 before loved-one to shine;  
 But the Beloved does incline  
 to those who meekly walk.

---

## 9

Discard your former ways, be free  
 from all you learnt before;  
 Humility's scarf round your neck  
 do wear . . . with poverty  
 Do link yourself, Leela, and see  
 He'll never let you down.

---

## 10

Wise Leela, you have known so well  
 the nature of your Lord . . .  
 With diamonds round your neck, you thought  
 to cast on him a spell.—  
 In reading thoughts he does excel  
 Discerner He of hearts.

---

## 11

O God, let me not clever be,  
 clever ones sorrows see—  
 Loved-one all favours did to me  
 when I was simpleton.

---

## 12

The meeting place of town's Elite  
 my house was formerly—  
 But when I diamonds touched, my spouse  
 did loathe my very sight;  
 All his affection vanished quite  
 and sorrow's reign commenced.—

---

## 13

The happiness that grows from mind  
 self-centred, cursed it be;  
 Unhappiness seek, which will find  
 the priceless love for thee!

---

## 14

Avoid to show off, argue not  
 with Chancsar . . . beware—  
 To you nor me belongeth He  
 and many more are there,  
 Who once by Him much favoured were  
 and now weep at his door.—

---



## 15

Leela, if by beseeching Him

He won't forgive your fall—

Keep on beseeching more and more  
on his compassion call—

Despair not, your pains he knows all—  
immense His mercy is.—

## 16

Despair not, rise and cleanse the house;  
prepare to sacrifice

Ancestors, 'Self' and all, there lies  
the cleaning process true.—

## Mumal and Rano—XXI

## 1

With love, all unalloyed, is dight

Yogi entirely—

Like imago at rising sun

he flutters, shimmering bright—

So reached he *Kak*, where with delight  
virgins enlivened him.

## 2

The *yogi* looks like sun so fair,

when scaling morning-skies

Such sweet entrancing fragrance pours

from out his silken hair;

Show us the land, where fragrance rare

O *yogi* you obtained!

## 3

O loin-clothed, one, let us know,

the way you virgins met

Why from your eyes continuously

the tears of blood do flow?

O Sami! on us light bestow

of beauty that you found!



4

"Go, go, to waters of Kak go  
 where love is made, they say!  
 Where there is neither night nor day  
 all shall Beloved see!

5

Resplendent diamonds gleam within  
 Magnetic Mumal's eyes....  
 Common or uncommon, who tries  
 to see these eyes, is slain.

6

O camel, for such enterprise  
 master bred you with care;  
 With vigilance cross over now  
 to where Ludhana lies;  
 Mumal we have to face this eve,  
 or when the sun doth rise;  
 With her consent on Kak's supplies  
 of blossoms you may browse.—

7

Beautiful like the roses sweet  
 are robes of damsels fair....  
 In Jasmin-fragrant coiffures they  
 have piled their long, fine hair.  
 From Beauty so entrancing, love  
 is kindled everywhere;  
 Wondrous show, damsels spinning there  
 on-lookers dumb-struck gaze.

8

Like fresh pan-leaves arc shawls they wear  
 of shimmering emerald silk—  
 Their bodies all refreshed with attar  
 and ambergris rare;  
 From fullsome plaits sandal and musk  
 perfume all round the air;  
 And delicate ears, dainty ware  
 of glistening gold do hold—  
 Today Mumal's in glorious form  
 rejoicing, free from care;  
 Because Rano without compare,  
 her fiancée hath become!..

9

Mumal had wounded many, lo  
 she's wounded now instead—  
 A pointed arrow struck her head  
 from knightly Rano's bow.—

11

10

Although Rano not destined is  
 Mumal to be with thee—  
 This will be clear from Rano's love....  
 still not resentful be,  
 Weep not, but bear it patiently,  
 Be true to kinship new.



## II

Kak could not hold those wanderers  
 Castles not tempt their mind..  
 No maid or mistresses their hearts  
 with magic strings could bind  
 For e'er Lahutis left behind  
 myriads of maids as these.—

## I2

Kak could not hold those wanderers  
 for wealth they did not care,—  
 It was by men of such a mould  
 royal virgins wounded were—  
 Lahutis they could not ensnare  
 with all their coquetry.—

## I3

They passed Kak at the corner, long  
 that corner turned have they..  
 To those who are now far away  
 what shall some 'Natir' do?

## III

I4  
 Ludhana is a hell mere  
 without Beloved mine;  
 Friends, Rano took offence last night  
 and left me torture here....  
 And Kak to me is poison sheer  
 the moment he is gone.—

## I5

O Rano, hardly had you come,  
 you turned and went away..  
 But were you not my spouse? why not  
 to wake me did you stay?  
 Then soon you would have known who lay  
 beside me on the bed.—

## I6

Whole night my lamp did burn, but see  
 the dawn is breaking now;  
 Rano without thee I shall die—

In God's name come to me  
 Oh—all the crows of Kak to thee  
 as messengers I sent.—

## I7

I trimmed the wick, again, again,  
 oil is consumed at last  
 Stranger-beloved, do return  
 riding a camel fast;  
 Weeping for Rano, night is past,  
 the whole of night I wept.—



## 18

Orion stands above my head;  
pleiades have declined....

The time is past. he did not come

Rano, for whom I pined—

Fie on cursed night, without my love

it passed, and left me woe—confined

To give me hell, he did not mind

now rests he in his Dhat.—

## 19

Rano, I weep when I behold

the empty places here

Dust settled on beds and divans

so drab looks all and cold;

Unused by master pillows lie,

and nought but dust they hold—

Without you, trees and flowers fade

and never more unfold....

Who would bear my freaks mainfold

but my Mendharo dear?

## 20

Continuously I watch your way,  
mine eyes are at the door—

May you come back to me Rano,

I heaven do implore;

You hold my life, else many more

of Rano's world contains.

## 21

I did not realize my sweet,

the faults I did commit;

They now recoil on me, and hit

me justly in the face.

## 22

'T was by your patience, I became

a human being dear—

'T was through a whim of mine, my name,

myself, you came to know.

## 23

If Mendharo to my own house

would come as guest, to stay with me—

To flames I'd give self-consciousness

my knowledge and my ancestry;

Pride egoism I would throw

Into the stove, most certainly

My sacrifice for loved-one be

the home, parents, myself.

## 24

Who with a lion doth ally

herself, must steady be—

Affectionate and vigilant

In Rano's wake do lie—

O Mumal, not like rain do pour

On all that you come by....

When resurrection day is nigh

you will of Rano think.



25

لے قسیدہ پاک کدنی لکھی

Go straight ahead, and look not back  
not turn this side or that,  
Or else, a temple-turning smack  
unwar'ly you receive.

## IV

26

A messenger ! in haste he is  
By Rano he is sent;  
With promise: "one you love will reach  
Ludhana for your bliss;  
The speedy camel will not miss  
to enter Kak at Dawn."

27

A message great and new arrived  
from Mendharo last night;  
We have received a gift divine,  
from Giver of all Light—  
"Ask not for caste—all we invite  
all are accepted here." —

28

Where need I drive the camel? when  
Glory all round is beaming?  
Kak in my being doth radiate,  
In me's Ludhano gleaming;  
Of Rano sweet my soul is dreaming  
there is none else but 'He'.—

29

Where need one drive the camel? when  
great radiance reigns all round?  
In my being is Kak . . . in me  
gardens and springs abound;  
There is no other voice or sound  
But all is 'Mendharo'.



# Barwo Sindhi—XXII (BELOVED)

O say, to what end you to others  
would a servant be?  
Of Gen'rous one hold stirrup, Lord  
of worlds and Destiny?  
Who loves Allah alone, but he  
supremely happy is!

A reed doth murmur with distress  
when cut, so even I  
Cry suddenly for loved-one in  
a fit of wretchedness;—  
O Leech, brand not my arm, sickness  
and pain are in the heart!

My breath no longer is my own—  
ruled now by other power—  
How is my breast assailed by woe  
that has a mountain grown?  
My love, in dream Himself had shown,  
brought joy, and then had gone!

# Barwo Sindhi—XXII

When longing for you in despair,  
Loved-one if once you came—  
My eye lashes upon your feet  
I'd lay in humblest prayer  
I'd for your carpet spread my hair  
and be your slave for aye!

Beloved, all from thee is good!  
but still, 't was not thy way,  
To make me mad with love and then  
depart with changing mood;  
And let me die in solitude,  
e'en though you loved me not!

Today again mine eyes are drenched,  
remembering the loved one—  
The drops of tears ne'er cease to flow,  
till all my being's blenched;  
Longing for loved-one is not quenched  
by looking at His works!



Today they called, with eyes so kind;  
 and killed me with their eyes . . .  
 My flesh they distributed and  
     left skeleton behind—  
 Did urge to search for truth and practice  
     patience in the mind;  
 They killed her whom they dead did find  
     aft'r wounding with smiles!

Sometimes their doors with latches tied,  
 On other days wide open are;  
 Some days I cannot enter, some  
     they call me with them to abide—  
 Sometimes I for their voices long;  
     and some days their secrets they confide!  
 Such are my masters glorified,  
     beloved masters mine!

O you, my dear beloved Sir,  
     thy slave I wholly am;  
 With folded hands I ever serve,  
     thy presence I desire;  
 Not for a mintue from your door  
     O Sire, I would retire,  
 I pray; Beloved do not tire—  
     Thy kind look

When with infinite grace, Beloved  
 doth walk upon the ground;  
 With "Bismillah" earth on His path  
     prints kisses all around—  
 The 'hours' by His beauty struck  
     stand with submission bound—  
 I swear, that never I have found  
     such Beauty anywhere!

As smith a link with link doth join  
     to make it ever last.  
 So Loved-one fixed me up, and fast  
     He holds me ever more!

The world is passing soon or late,  
     one breath it is, not long;  
 And with their feet they'll bury you  
     a tomb will be your fate;  
 The measuring rod and spade, do wait  
     as last things on this earth.—

Friendship by words they do profess;  
     an easy thing to do;  
 The proof will come when need and stress  
     the real friends will reveal.



## 14

Changed Adam's children now do treat  
sincerity as trifle;  
Who on this earth a human being's  
flesh would like to eat:  
O friend in this world nothing will  
remain but perfume sweet,  
One single-minded you may meet  
all else is outward show!

## 15

The heart loves only One and more  
it never doth admit;  
Give your heart to that One, even  
if hundreds sue for it;  
Ridiculous are those that flit  
for friends from door to door!

## 16

My loved ones, all my blemishes....  
weaknesses came to know;  
They never did reproach me... nay,  
nor did they anger show—  
Loved-ones a covering did bestow  
o'er all my shortcomings!

## 17

The Generous One, presence of loved ones  
kindly granted me—  
Their thoughts were to return and  
re-establish harmony;  
Their way is: though a breach there be  
they never will forsake.



# Dahar—XXIII (DESERT)

I

Relate to us some tale, O thorn;  
tale of this lake relate;

Of moonlit-nights that did adorn  
the place, and how you fared.

2

Be calm, and tell us what you know  
of keepers of this lake.

Today in wretched plight and woe  
difficult days you pass.

3

Did really all thy friends depart?  
thy loving associates:—

With crimson fruit thou laden art  
that fall all over thee.—

4

If for the masters of this lake,

you would such sorrow feel,

How could you lovely blossoms make  
and such a wealth of fruit?

# Dahar—XXIII

5

The lake is dry, and brushwood grows  
about the dusty banks;

And human being rarely shows  
his face about the place.

II

6

When waters ran abundantly  
big fish, you wouldn't return;

Today, tomorrow you will be  
in net of fishing-folk.

7

O fish, you grew so over-fat,  
Butting against all that you met;

Expanse of water now hath set—

Dried is what once you saw.—

8

“Into my heart their hook they thrust—  
the very flesh they cleft,

They did not kill right-out, but left  
perpetual sorrow's line.”



## 9

As great as is 'Thy' name, so great  
the mercy I implore—

Without pillars without supports,  
thou my refuge e'er more—

When Thou knowst everything before  
ah me.... why should I ask?

## 10

Beloved, do not slacken thou

Thy ties with humble me;

One so contemptible has got

no other hold but thee....

Only thy sweet name, verily

I know and remember.

## III

## II

Few nights of earth.... o'er which your head  
you lost Oh simpleton....

Oh many more will come, when dead  
you quite alone will lie.—

## 12

Sleeper arise! akin to sin

Is such a senseless sleep—

Kingly affection none can win

By sleeping recklessly.—

## IV

## 13

In the mountains there is chatter—

cranes are wanting to go out;

They discussed last night the matter

and this morning they are gone.

## 14

Have you then forgotten quite

and their talk you never heard

When preparing, they last night

Had decided to depart.—

## 15

Oh my crane, your flock has gone—

it departed yesterday—

Ah, without loved-one, alone

what will you in mountains do.

## 16

They in coveys travel ever,

their connections never cut—

Not like man their kinship sever,

Oh, behold the loving birds.



## 17

O man, at dawn what glitters bright  
 take not for drops of dew.  
 But seeing sorrowing ones, the night  
 Burst into thousand tears.

## 18

Trouble will come to those, who do  
 In 'face' and 'form' delight—  
 Fools laugh and laugh, forgetting quite  
 the task that they came for.

## 19

Degenerates enamoured were  
 Of froth, . . . milk tasted not.  
 They lost 'Direction' through world's snare  
 and empty-handed went.

## 20

Today a bridegroom gay and strong—  
 tomorrow lies in grave;  
 Building a fort of sand . . . how long  
 will you be building still.

## Chatu—XXIV

## (SHARK-HUNTERS)

## 1

Even the wise confounded got  
 and heroes lost their wits—  
 Those who went out to face the sea,  
 were caught by current's plot;  
 Of "Ebb and tide", they all forgot  
 what they had learnt before.

## 2

A power weird is in Kalach,  
 lost is who enters there;  
 No one brings news who does ens'nare  
 the nets and keeps them down.

## 3

To Kalachi but yesterday  
 brave men went forth with spears;  
 Late were the brothers . . . none returned,  
 nought more of them one hears.  
 Whirlpools have swallowed them one fears—  
 the fishers all are dead.



## 4

Where fishers used to seek the fish,  
 the barren sand-dunes lie;  
 Fish-sellers ruined, the river dry;  
 and tax collector gone.

## 5

Had they been near, they would have come  
 perchance too far they got—  
 Fisher folk saw their haunts, called out  
 to know about their lot . . .  
 Alas, response received they not  
 and sadly they returned.—

## 6

The bazar is without fish-smell,  
 while market formerly  
 With small carps, and with herrings too  
 abundantly did swell.  
 Now there is not a shrimp to sell  
 buyers have empty hands.

## 7

You throw the nets in creeks . . . not so  
 the sharks are ever killed;  
 Possess strong sweep nets that you throw  
 in deepest sea below;—  
 Sharks not to shallow waters go,  
 and depths are far ahead.

## 8

To enter sea, prepare your ropes;  
 strengthen them bit by bit—  
 —Relationship do not befit  
 Kalachi fishermen!

## 9

Shark hunter's 'mood', that is the way  
 a victory to reap—  
 Their eagerness for whirlpools, and  
 their longing for the deep,  
 Deprives them every night of sleep—  
 they yearn to kill the shark.

## 10

In search, they into whirlpools got  
 and to fathomlessness . .  
 They killed the shark; with happiness  
 now beam fishermen's eyes.



## Kapaitie—XXV

### (SPINNER)

#### I

#### I

Although a spinner, not depend  
upon yourself entirely;  
The knowing buyer faults at end  
may find within your thread.

#### 2

As long as you can spin, spin on,  
work-season soon declines;  
All spinners are . . . but work of all  
is not in favour lines—  
She ne'er breaks thread, nor for rest pines  
who has realized the truth.

#### 3

This phase will end so soon, as long,  
you can spin, spinning keep—  
For your Eid do prepare a work  
of art, and success reap.  
That scorching tears you may not weep  
'midst your girl friends tomorrow.

## Kapaitie—XXV

#### 4

Toil on and feel not proud, or else  
your Lord offended be—  
The wheel turn . . . round your neck hang scarf  
Of sweet humility . . .  
You little faulty one—then see  
by your work is not in vain.

#### II

#### 5

When connoisseurs arrived, they found,  
the flaws that did not please.  
They called to spinner . . . in their way  
they asked: "How made you these?"  
"Untridy I, have failed to tease  
the lumps from out the yarn." —

#### 6

With rancour in their hearts, although  
with fine yarn spools they fill,  
Not even an ounce the experts will  
Of their product accept.—



## 10

The spinners, spinning, spinning were—  
but now not one I spy—  
Spinning wheels in disorder lie,  
and sitting huts are closed.—

## 11

I neither see same cotton-pods  
nor spinners are the same—  
So empty the bazar became  
to see it, breaks my heart!

## 12

Wool in my tunic, I proceed  
to spinning-yard... alas,  
No single spinner breathing was  
they'd gone to sleep for aye.

## 7

Wondrous devotion spinners have,  
who tremble, spin and spin;  
For earning good, in spinning yard  
at sun-rise they begin—  
Such soul-beauty the connoisseurs  
even for themselves would win  
Yarn spun by spinners so genuine  
without weighing they buy.—

## 111

## 8

Who in themselves the cotton thrash  
their thread's without compeer;  
The 'whirr' of spinning wheel, they would  
not let their life's breath hear,—  
Secretly, tremblingly they go  
on spinning so sincere—  
Those that refuse the jewels here,  
priceless themselves they are.

## 9

Now yesterday you did not spin—  
Today you have no time to spend;...  
You silly one, how long the friend  
shall overlook your faults?



# Rippa—XXVI (CALAMITY)

I

I

O mother, sorrow's harrowing  
has swamped my whole being—  
All honour to the sorrowing  
who walk on uphill way.

2

My love took joy and health from me;  
sorrow my mate became;  
Mother, my fate destruction be  
thus parted from my love.

3

Sorrows have neither hands nor feet,  
yet wildly run through me—  
Within they travel in dense rows  
nought can their rage defeat,  
Oh, who in loneliness complete  
would without loved-one live?

4

Dry ground gives rise to growth, in rain,  
the same with me it is . . .  
From separation growth of pain  
and sorrow issue forth.

172

173

# Rippa—XXVI

II

5

The mind awake doth never stay,  
although with scorn I keep it reined—  
With dust gets covered all the day  
just like a road-side tree.

6

When I lay waking on my bed,  
Loved-one's favours stirred memory;  
My pillow got all wet with tears  
hand too, on which did lie my head  
Memory kept on . . . with pain I said:  
"Sisters, my life is all in vain."

7

Mine eyes don't sleep, their drowsiness  
now all but broken is;  
When fires dull, mem'ry's distress  
makes flames shoot up again.

8

Rememb'ring your kindness, I live . .  
favours endless I count,  
Numberless graces you did give  
Beloved, to poor me!



## 9

For outside clouds I need not care,  
 rain ever pours within;  
 Beloved's clouds are everywhere  
 on my horizons here.

## 10

Desiring to forget, I groan,  
 and yet I can't forget—  
 Longing hurts like a broken bone  
 sharp and continuously.

## III

## II

Keep secretly, and not disclose  
 through tears your wretched state;  
 And all the sorrows bear, till those  
 arrive who pains remove.

## 12

O hide your love, as potters do  
 that cover up the kiln—  
 Free fire cannot bake a pot, until duntars  
 the potters' ways pursue;  
 As potters do with kiln, so you  
 must ne'er uncover fire.

# KarayaI—XXVII (THE SWAN)

## I

## I

The root of Lotus flower fair  
 in deepest waters grows—  
 High soars the humble-bee, but fate  
 their inmost wishes knows.  
 Through love, fulfilment it bestows,  
 and makes the lovers meet.

## 2

The swan that shunned the cormorants  
 now spreads its wings, to fly  
 To heavens high! so to descry  
 fountains where his love dwells.

## 3

Now from the height, the deepest depth  
 his eye doth pierce, to find  
 The things to which he is inclined,  
 the tiny shining bits.

## II

## 4

Why not you enter depths and dive  
 for bits, rejoicing there  
 My swan, why for the banks you care;  
 no use have banks for thee.



## 5

These waters by the cormorants  
polluted, soiled they were—  
Swans are ashamed to enter there  
and never venture near.

## 6

Why are you sitting mourning here  
my darling swan arise . . .  
Go, enter now the waters clear  
and search with watchful eyes.  
Search not on banks, the banks despise;  
despise the vulgar road.

## 7

O foolish swan ! with cormorants  
do not keep company;  
But change the dirty waters, seek  
the clean ones speedily . . .  
Or else you'll drink one day . . . may be  
with herons of the swamps.

## 8

Why do you hang about the banks  
or by the roadside hide?  
To meadows broad of 'Oneness' go,  
plan no escape, abide,  
And find the lake of love, to float  
in its refreshing tide—  
Of secrets hum, of Reality—  
with fellow swans reside;  
With recognition true your heart  
cleans, and be purified—  
Inspired by the guide, pick grains,  
and sing, by nought defied;  
So that you never on this side  
bird-hunter may behold.

## 9

O swan ! come to clear waters, where  
you are remembered still—  
The hunters here are out to kill  
and they are after you !

## 10

The swans divine are those who pick  
the pearls from waters pure;  
They never soil their beaks with mud;  
some fishes to secure;  
In crowds of cormorants, obscure  
They are . . . world knows them not.



## III

## II

The lakes are same, but different birds  
now in their waters lave..

Ah..those with graceful necks, who gave  
sweet songs, flew far away.

## I2

The lovely peacocks all are dead,  
and not one swan I see..

Instead the crafty snipes..ah me  
have here their homeland made.

ويا مورسری صبح  
الیهو هیکلو  
وطن یوروژی  
کورن کایارن

## Marui—XXVII

## I

## I

When 'Be' was not yet said, nor was  
there flesh-bone scheme or plan.

When Adam had not yet received  
his form, was not yet man;

Then my relationship began,  
my recognition too.

## 2

"Am I not thy Lord"? came a voice;  
a voice so sweet and clear;

And I said: "yes" with all my heart  
when I this voice did hear;

And with a bond I did adhere  
that moment to my love.

## 3

Ere God created souls, by saying;

"Be",—all one they were;

Together were they—and behold  
my kinship started there—

I still this recognition bear  
with thee, Beloved mine.—

چون که خدایان  
خلایا را خدا



11

4

A prisoner I by destiny,

or who would want, then from  
"We nearer than thy life's vein are"

to that home I will flee—  
When will I be from mansions free  
and reach my Maru sweet!

I'll burn these houses... Mansions all  
that shorn of loved-ones are—

"All things return to their origin" A  
that 's my longing's call;

May I walk home, away from all  
and see my land 'malir'.

No news, no dream vouchsafed to me  
no messenger doth come;

From 'there to here', there's no reply,  
no answer to my plea—

Princes, I know not what must be  
accounts you did render.

7

O God, do send the messenger  
who will my message bear—  
I do belong to them, although  
to own me they don't care...  
I hold the pen within my hand,  
may some one paper spare;  
Tears check my writing, in despair  
O'er pen they fall and fall.

8

Scores of patches my bodice shows,  
my head with rags is decked—  
I to my people hoped to go  
and all robes did reject;  
My shawl from Dhat, may God protect  
its virtue to hide my shame.

9

In the condition that I came,  
could I return in same—  
What glory, like a seasonal rain  
what joy would I reclaim.

10

Almighty God, let it not be  
that I in bondage die  
Enchained my body night and day,  
O doth weep in misery—  
O let me first my homeland see  
and then my days let end.



## II

O where is my distinction gone  
 my beauty and my grace  
 My homeland I can never seek  
 in this condition base;  
 If beauty granted be then face  
 I dare Beloved one.

## I2

Omar, my face so dirty is,  
 my beauty now is done;  
 And yet, I have to go where none  
 without beauty received.

## III

## I3

Fair Marui does not wash her hair,  
 She does not smile or eat,  
 On Omar's justice relies she  
 who robbed her freedom sweet;  
 "The havoc you have wrought, you'll meet  
 at your arrival 'there'."

## I4

Fair Marui does not wash her hair,  
 clotted it is, ugly  
 The nomad folks of desert land  
 live in her memory—  
 "Omar, parted from them, unfree  
 I'll ne'er in forts reside."

## I5

Fair Marui does not wash her hair,  
 for Malir longeth she . . .  
 Only when prince doth set her free  
 balance restored will be . . .  
 Whole desert will drink milk, for glee  
 when 'trust' is safe returned.

## I6

There is no force to make them pine,—  
 no taxes in their land,  
 They gather lovely flowers red  
 for mangers of their kine—  
 Malir with lustrous smiles doth shine  
 there priceless marus arc.

## I7

Loved-one I never can forget;  
 my mind with him is filled—  
 Nothing you see is like Him, so  
 to sight he does not yield;  
 Because, loved-one His house has built  
 in negativity.—

## I8

Omar, for me your mansions grand  
 a double torture arc;  
 Here you torment me . . . there, so far  
 loved-ones accuse me too.



## 19

To Maru needle joined my breath,  
 a needle, oh so fine,  
 My heart is there, my earthy flesh  
 must here to force resign;  
 My breath is in the thatch divine  
 my body's to mansions bound.

---

## 20

The needle's Beauty, ne'er shall I  
 compare with kingliness;  
 The needle covers naked ones  
 but not 'itself' doth dress;  
 The twice-born only can possess  
 knowledge of its loveliness.

---

## IV

## 21

"Palatial doors and windows I  
 will build for thee, Marui—  
 But here now . . . lovely canopies  
 I shall raise over thee . . .  
 Those who did ne'er enquiries make  
 why so continuously  
 You weep for them? something must be  
 wrong with the desert-folk."

---

## 22

"How to forget him, whom my mem'ry  
 holds for ever more?"  
 Since: "am I not thy Lord?" was uttered,  
 or e'en long before;  
 Ere: Born He's not . . . gives birth to none  
 from the inane did soar.—  
 Remem'ring Him—Marui so sore  
 may die today or tomorrow.

---

## 23

Threads Maru round my wrists tied . . . gold  
 fine gold they are for me;  
 Omar, don't offer silks to rustic  
 maid, they leave me cold—  
 Because much dearer I do hold  
 my worn ancestral shawl.

---

## 24

Were I to breathe my last, looking  
 to my home longingly—  
 My body don't imprison here  
 in bondage and unfree—  
 A stranger from her love away  
 not bury separately:  
 The cool earth of the desert let  
 the dead one's cover be;  
 When last breath comes, O carry me  
 to Malir, I implore.

---



## II

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## IV

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 why so continuously  
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 maid, they leave me cold—  
 Because much dearer I do hold  
 my worn ancestral shawl.

## 24

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 to my home longingly—  
 My body don't imprison here  
 in bondage and unfree—  
 A stranger from her love away  
 not bury separately;  
 The cool earth of the desert let  
 the dead one's cover be;  
 When last breath comes, O carry me  
 to Malir, I implore.



25

As oysters long for cloud, and cranes  
 long for their native-hills,  
 So deepest longing my heart strains  
 till nought of life remains.—  
 How would I sit here, if not chains  
 held me a prisoner? —

26

The wounds that happy rustics left  
 today fester again—  
 Sumro, sorrow dwells in me  
 of every joy bereft;  
 From Maru's separation, cleft  
 is every bone of mine. —

V.

27

My girl-friends in reproachful mood,  
 today sent word to me:  
 "Silly one, you perhaps have eaten  
 much of princely food,  
 And friends, and your relations good  
 you have forgotten all." —

28

In corners of the fort, to quell  
 her grief Marui doth mourn  
 Remembering Malir, she doth weep,  
 'makes others weep as well—  
 O may the maid reach home and dwell  
 amongst her Marus soon. —

29

"Would that I never had been born,  
 or died at birth": she says;  
 "O what a torture, shame and scorn  
 to Marus I became." —

30

Destiny brought me here...reside  
 I do unhappy here;  
 My body's here—my heart is there  
 where Maru doth abide;  
 May God now turn this sorrow's tide  
 and let me meet my love.—

31

The lightnings are now newly dressed,  
 the season doth return;  
 Mine eyes do not stop drizzling...for  
 ancestral land they yearn—  
 I would not with such sadness burn  
 if they would think of me. —



## 32

If looking to my native land  
 with longing I expire;  
 My body carry home, that I  
 may rest in desert-sand;  
 My bones if Malir reach, at end,  
 though dead, I'll live again.

## VI

## 33

A messenger arrived 'this day  
 authentic news conveys;  
 "Do not forget your distant love  
 and do not die," he says,  
 You shall reach home; only few days  
 in this fort you may stay?

## 34

The one who from my homeland came,  
 oh at his feet I fall—  
 And to this traveller, my heart  
 did open, telling all—  
 An instant more behind this wall  
 to be, how I abhor.

## Marui—XXVIII

## 35

"Don't cry, don't weep and fret;  
 shed no tears of dismay;  
 Whatever days appear,  
 O let them pass away,—  
 For after sorrow, joy  
 O Marui, comes to stay—  
 Desert maid know, your chains  
 by destiny's own way  
 Are moved, and now you may  
 throw them into the fire."

## 36

O mar, a traveller I did meet  
 today, with news for me,—  
 And as he stood and message gave  
 from the Beloved sweet  
 I felt all sufferings did retreat  
 and my chains all did fall.

## 37

My iron shackles all are gone.—  
 Love's chains unyielding are.  
 Unhappy days without Marus  
 in mansions, life did mar..  
 My countrymen, they are too far  
 reproach them I cannot.—



38

Good were the days that I in pain  
 in tortuous prison passed;  
 Storms roared above me threateningly,  
 my cries for help were vain;  
 But lo: my love by prison chain,  
 was chastened, purified.

---

39

The days I passed in deep despair,  
 away from homeland mine,—  
 My tribesmen will reproach me, if  
 my face looks washed and fair—  
 So to their thatches I'll repair  
 to wash off mansion dirt!

---

40

"Don't weep, nor cry in agony  
 but when the world's asleep;  
 At night raise both your little hands  
 to God, and hopeful be—  
 Where you wedded were, brave Marui  
 'that homeland' thou shalt see."

---

## Sohni—XXIX

I

Currents have their velocity,  
 rivers their speed possess—  
 But where there's love, a different rush  
 its currents do express.  
 And those that love fathomlessness,  
 are steeped in depth of thought.—

---

2

Master the lesson thoroughly  
 that law doth teach Sohnî—  
 Then contemplate and meditate  
 till 'truth' comes near to thee—  
 But "Reality's Vision" will be  
 reward of lovers true.

---

3

So many, many line the banks—  
 "Sahar! Sahar!" they cry—  
 Afraid some to risk life, and some  
 Renouncing would die.  
 But Sahar meets, who without sigh  
 Joyfully waters seek.

---



4

The rivulets are not yet deep;  
the depth is far ahead,

O friends, relations are secure

When one at home doth keep

But had you seen my Sahar's face

you would no longer sleep—

Nor stop me,—but take float and leap  
into the running stream.

5

If you his features were to see

you could no longer rest;

Nor by your husband's side, would you  
so comfortable be—

But earthen-jar, long before me,

you would pick up and plunge.

6

If you had seen with your own eyes,  
what I have seen and know—

For that you'd surely sacrifice

your homes and husbands too.

7

Ah! those who do their eyes and face

Adjust to Sahar sweet,

Behold! if e'en without support

They plunge in whirlpool's maze—

They are immune from river's ways

For waters drown them not.

8

In wintry night and rain Sohni

seeks flood with jar of clay—

"Oh let us go and ask Sohni

who knows of love's true way;

Whose thoughts with Sahar always stay  
throughout the night and day."

9

From Sahar, Sohni drank with zeal,

life-giving draught of love—

Intoxicated with its taste

she still its charm doth feel—

By pointed arrow, sharp as steel

of cupid, she was struck.—

10

From "Dum", who chides, she has no fright  
her spouse he never was;—

See,—even muddy, gurgling stream

her beauty cannot blight!

For Sahar, she in darkest night

will plunge in eddies wild.



## II

## II

O sisters, tinkling cattle bells  
 my every limb have stirred—  
 The love, by bell-music aroused  
 one not to strangers tells—  
 The friend, my main-stay, far he dwells  
 yet sends his solace sweet.

## 12

All round the herdsman's bells I hear  
 the tinkling cattle bells;  
 When sleeping, echoes of their chime  
 from far did reach mine ear.  
 How could I sleep when travelling near  
 this music rent my heart?

## 13

Stirred by the bells, how could I sleep—  
 restfully and in peace?  
 When I a hundred times the day  
 for Sahar long and weep!  
 In chains of love Sahar doth keep  
 my being till I die.

## 14

On this side of the stream, the strain  
 of echoes reaching me—  
 From loving Mehar's bells, old wounds  
 began to bleed again;  
 To go to him and soothe my pain  
 incumbent then became!

## III

## 15

Young buffaloes she seeks, her woes  
 with them she doth confide;  
 "My Mehar of the Buffaloes  
 oh have you met him yet?"

## 16

She puts her arms, by grief opprest  
 around their necks and weeps.—  
 "Coarse grasses that you eat, I'll place  
 against my aching breast,  
 And with your voice I shall be blest  
 and ever happy be."

## 17

The sun is setting, and the crows  
 in trees at rest now are;  
 The call for prayers Sohnî hears  
 and she picks up the jar,  
 To float across the river far,  
 and see where Sahar is.



18

She need not ask for slopes, she finds  
 a slope at any place;  
 An easy slope and easy ways  
 are for the fickle minds—  
 But those whom love to Sahar binds  
 need neither slopes nor ease.—

19

The false ones seek for sloping banks,  
 and only seek for show;  
 But those who Sahar truly love  
 where they must enter, know  
 For those who with love's thirst do glow  
 whole river is one-step.—

## IV

20

Blest be dark night, the Moonlit night  
 be now so far away,  
 So that except Mehar's, I may  
 not see another face.—

21

Go without 'Self', seek no support,  
 and forget everything,  
 Sohni, thy love alone thee to  
 the other side will bring;  
 "Longing", thy guide, the thundering  
 river shalt cas'ly cross.—

22

A call sounds from the other side,  
 clearly "Come!" it doth say.—  
 The river overflow<sup>3</sup> with waves,  
 skies overcast and grey—  
 I know that with whom God doth stay  
 shall never, never drown.—

23

A call sounds from the other side,  
 clearly "Come!" it doth say—  
 River in spate, and weak one with  
 an unbaked jar of clay—  
 I know, nought yields to water's sway  
 that upheld is by 'Truth'.—

24

A black foul night, and from above  
 sky, rain in torrents sends—  
 On one side fear of tracklessness  
 On other, lion stands—  
 "If even life in effort ends  
 I shall keep tryst of love."—

25

A black foul night, an unbaked jar  
 no handy float be here—  
 She plungeth into waves, without  
 a moment's thought or fear;  
 To her love, river doth appear  
 a dry and open road.—



26

She's neither here nor there, alone  
 in midst of roaring stream—  
 On dry banks only Sahar stands  
 all else is flooded zone—  
 Oh seek the waves! mercy is shown  
 only to drowning ones.

27

She took the jar . . . she plunged so deep  
 may God the maiden save  
 Her leg in mouth of dog-fish and  
 her neck the shark will have—  
 Her bangles, garments in the mud—  
 her hair floats on the wave—  
 The fishes big and small, all round  
 are crowding, food they crave;  
 And crocodiles prepare a grave—  
 poor Sohni will be sliced.

28

A drowning man, by feeble grasses  
 at the banks will hold,  
 Look at the wondrous chivalry  
 the tender straws unfold,  
 To hold him up, they will make hold,  
 or else with him will sink.—

29

I knew not that the jar was faked  
 its colours were the same—  
 My heart beyond control, I thrust  
 myself on jar unbaked;  
 The thing on which my life I staked  
 in midstream landed me.

30

By help of which the longing eyes  
 did see Beloved's face;  
 The jar, how could I sacrifice  
 as dear as life to me?

31

My heart exhausted is and weak,  
 no strength my limbs have now;  
 "O Sahar, thou dost know all this,  
 help me, cast thy tow—  
 I am so ignorant, and thou  
 my love so great thou art."

32

The jar, the means to reach, did break,  
 alas, the maiden drowned,  
 But only then she heard the sound  
 of Sahar's voice draw nigh.



33

The means on which she had relied,  
 did thrust her in the flood;  
 And only after she had died  
 she heard the herdsman's call.—

## V

34

"The jar is broken ! let it go  
 obstructive screen it was mere—  
 My real being is singing still  
 soul-music still is here  
 And still I seek my Sahar dear,  
 though without 'action' now".

35

My heart, you keep on swimming,  
 the jar let break and go . . .  
 My eyes, I train them every day  
 more of control to know;  
 The Herdsmen led me, and did show  
 to me friend, the 'straight' path.

36

Suggest no rafts to those who love  
 nor ask boat-men around;  
 Sohni that is for Sahar bound  
 enquiring doth not need.

37

Hundreds were by the river drowned—  
 but river 'drowned was by this maid;  
 The current broke itself instead,  
 by knocking bluntly 'gainst the banks.

38

As long she was alive,—she ne'er  
 sat down, did never rest  
 Now she lies underground, . . her quest  
 in silence still goes on.

39

If loved-ones met on judgement day  
 that would be very near,  
 But ah ! so very far away,  
 tidings of 'Union' are.

40

Sahar, Sohni and the sea  
 inseparably 'One'—  
 This ineffable mystery  
 no one can ever solve.



## VI

41

- "On what count am I here? O why  
bereft of loved ones face?
- "You preach: "Deflect from sin", but I  
your virtue do deny—
- "Moral control I do not need  
nor do for music sigh.—
- "Keep closed your lips, and from within  
yourself you'll beautify—
- "These that on 'Top' of waters flow  
are bubbles that belie.—
- "Feed on selflessness, for your love  
Mince-meat to be, then try—
- "If headlong into dirt you rush  
yourself you'll purify—
- "Nought does possess more wealth than dust  
nothing with dust can vic,—
- "Who runs by stirrup of the guide  
the other side will spy.—
- "Falcon, pick up your greedy self  
and fly with it on high.—
- "Don't lose sight of the friends, walking  
in veils that mystify.—
- "More than Oneness in love, is like  
splitting two-lettered tie—
- "Those who do long for wine of love  
with purest them supply."—

"These ravings are the vain reply  
of tortured, sickly one.—  
On what count, am, I here oh! why?  
Bereft of loved ones face."



"These ravings are the vestiges of  
—, and the sickly cure to

"On what count am I hated? why  
bereft of loved ones face?

"You preach: 'Deflect from sin', but I  
your virtue do deny—

"Moral control I do not need  
nor do for music sigh—

"Keep closed your lips, and from within  
yourself you'll beautify—

"There that on 'Top' of waters flow  
are bubbles that belie—

"Feed on selfishness, for your love  
Mincement to be, then try—

"If headlong into dirt you rush  
yourself you'll purify—

"Nought does possess more wealth than dust  
nothing with dust can vie—

"Who runs by strap of the guide  
the other side will try—

"Falcon, pick up your greedy self  
and fly with it on high—

"Don't lose sight of the friends, walking  
in veils that mystify—

"More than Oneness in love, is like  
splitting two-battered tie—

"Those who do long for wine of love  
with purest stem supply—"

## GENERAL CRITERIA

### SHAH ABDUL LATIF

#### An Appreciation of His Art\*

It was no wonder either, that fourteen hundred years ago, the Muslim missionaries, who had been transformed into a kind of nationalism. The necessary consequence is that "man and thing" are still in full flourish. Everyone boasts of his own poets. That would not be bad if he did not run down others to exalt his own. But the true aesthetic insight is still lacking, and beauty is not admired because it is beautiful, but because the object belongs to him.

In judging Shah Abdul Latif therefore, we are not going to use the criteria that our own hearts suggest, but we are using those that have been brought into existence by modern world and are well recognised and admitted into the literary world today.

By

ALLAMAH I. I. KAZI

Bar-at-Law

#### First Test

It is more than a hundred years ago that Carlyle gave up writing verse in favour of prose. He said that if he wrote the Bible and Quran were written in prose, it was good enough for him; and he added for the benefit of the versifier that unless his verse could be sung it would never amount to poetry and it was hardly worth writing.

Now let us apply this criterion to the work of most of the greatest poets of the world that we know— we don't mind whether it be Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, or Walt Whitman. Will they stand this test?

Before we decide whether they will, let us see whether they have stood the test. Has every line of their creation been sung in their own country? We do not worry whether they are singable at present. The modern man will laugh and say "Well, their's is not all lyrical poetry but other kind of poetry too which nobody expects to be sung."

The reply is, Carlyle knew that, but what he meant was that the quality of the line of even so-called lyrical poetry is not always musical. Even in their lyrics some of the greatest

\* part was originally published by the Sindhi Adabi Board in 1961 in the form of a monograph. Because of its immense value to the reader it is being reprinted here.



## GENERAL CRITERIA

Our times boast of internationalism, and no wonder either. It was introduced religiously, officially, fourteen hundred years ago. But at heart we all remain at the utmost nationalists. The irony is, that Quran's religion itself has been transformed into a kind of nationalism. The necessary consequence is that "mine and thine" are still in full flourish. Everyone boasts of his own poets. That would not be bad if he did not run down others to exalt his own. But the true aesthetic insight is still lacking, and beauty is not admired because it is beautiful, but because the object belongs to 'me'.

In judging Shah Abdul Latif therefore, we are not going to use the criteria that our own hearts suggest; but we are using those that have been brought into existence by modern world and are well recognised and admitted into the literary world today.

### First Test.

It is more than one hundred years ago that Carlyle gave up writing verse in favour of prose and cried out that if Vedas, Bible and Quran were written in prose, it was good enough for him; and he added for the benefit of the versifier that unless his verse could be sung it would never amount to poetry and it was hardly worth writing.

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The reply is, Carlyle knew that, but what he meant was that the quality of the line of even so-called lyrical poetry is not always musical. Even in their lyrics some of the greatest



poets deal with the 'Idea' and not with the Feeling, while Latif's peculiarity is that not a line has been created which has conscious idea as its theme, but is only the product of the deepest emotion.

Latif never thought of his poems as 'works' because they did not entail labour. He created them in ecstatic moods when no work as work was possible. So he called them *Risalo* (Message) and every line, without that he should have suggested, has been sung by those who understood the verses, and also by those who could not understand them at all. Sung they have been, and no one can stop people from singing them. This verifies the assertion of Carlyle that there is a kind of poetry that every man feels like singing, rather than reciting or reading, because of its inherent music.

One Arab writer describes poetry as "music, expressed through harmony of words",—in contradistinction to music which is expressed by harmony of sounds, thereby emphasising that the musical quality inherent in the lines is *sine qua non* of poetry.

So this is the first test of a great poet as admitted by everyone. Anyone may apply that touchstone and see the result for himself.

Some one might suggest that consideration of the volume of verse would be necessary. Even there, Latif's work will compare favourably with most of the great poets. There are practically thirty dramatic incidents, and even there, except Shakespeare and Goethe, no other poet will come up to him as far as the bulk is concerned.

### Second Test.

The second test that the modern critic generally applies is: can one replace words in the lines of the poet to improve the lines, make them more expressive, or add to their beauty? Ben Jonson, when once told that Shakespeare never corrected his verses while he himself laboured to correct his work more than ten times, replied that he wished Shakespeare corrected it twenty times. But time has proved that the work which was corrected ten times may still be correctable, but most of the spontaneously produced verses of Shakespeare defy correction and in most of the lines alteration of a single word

would destroy the harmony of the verse itself. Any way, it will be deterioration and not improvement.

Very few poets, so far as larger bulk of their work is concerned, will stand this test, while in Latif to alter one word in any line is to alter the notes in the melody. It entirely kills it. It becomes jarring. No word can be replaced or displaced. This applies to the entire bulk of his creation. It is not every line but every word, and the way it is placed, that is of essence and is unchangeable. No poet of the world can stand this test as far as the entirety of his work is concerned. Great many lines of Shakespeare have been altered and supposed to have been improved, leaving other poets aside.

So this is the second test that the greatest modern critics apply to find out the genuineness of a poetical work. These two should be quite enough to decide the place of a great poet in the galaxy of the world poets.

### Third Test.

Now the third, the most important and unfailing test that profound criticism has devised in the last resort to decide the place of a poet, is, the use of the medium through which the poet expresses himself. Milton is supposed to have used 8000 words, and Shakespeare 16000 words of the English language. That is one way of judging the compass of expression, without considering the suitability of the use. But that is not the way to apply this test.

Can the English language be made to express ideas in the sixteenth century beyond the limits that Shakespeare could extend it to? In other words, the utmost use that a language can be put to as far as the expression is concerned, is the criterion. No man could have dreamt or dared to express through Elizabethan English what Shakespeare did. That holds good in the case of Dante as well as Goethe. But the limits that these poets reached are, except Shakespeare, not exceptional as to what the Sindhi poet did.

The language of the eighteenth century Sind made itself pliant and capacious in the hands of Latif. One can hardly recognise that it is the language ordinarily spoken at that period in Sind. A dialect as some would call it, Sindhi becomes one of the grandest and most expressive languages when

pliant<sup>2</sup>  
capacious



plied by this great poet. We can hardly recognise or realise that his medium is that simple provincial dialect. This reminds us of Carlyle's remark about the Scotch of Robert Burns. He writes:

"This Burns appears under every disadvantage. Uninstructed, poor, born only to hard manual toil, and writing, when it came to that, in a rustic special dialect, known only to a small province of the country he lived in. Had he written even what he did write in the general language of England, I doubt not, he had already become universally recognised as being, or capable to be, one of our greatest men. That he should have tempted so many to penetrate through the rough husk of that dialect of his, is proof that there lay something far from the common within."

Carlyle does not say, however, that Burns changed the complexion of that dialect to such an extent that no one before or after him could do with the Scotch.

Shakespeare is a little more different. It could be said his English has never been imitated in four centuries.

The words of Professor Gibb that he uses about the Quran are *mutatis mutandis* applicable to that of Latif's *Risalo*. Disagreeing with Carlyle's opinion (who did not know Arabic) about the diction of the Quran, Professor Gibb who is not only a life-long teacher of Arabic but an authority on the subject even in the Arabic countries, writes:

"The question of literary merit is not to be judged on *a-priori* grounds but in relation to the genius of the Arabic language, and no man in 1500 years has ever played on that deep-toned instrument with such power, such boldness, and such range of emotional effect as Muhammad did."

To say it in so many words: Latif put Sindhi to the use that no man had done before him, and no man has dared to claim to have done in two centuries after him.

Without dwelling further on this point, we may now move on to the fourth criterion, namely 'choice of subject' and the mode of treating it.

## CHOICE OF SUBJECT

Choice of the subject and the mode of treatment are no less indicative of the place and the status that the poet occupies in his hierarchy. By 'choice' we do not mean conscious or deliberate choice, because generally it is the subject itself that induces and inspires the subconscious mind of the artist. What we mean is that because different subjects were apt to inspire the artists at different periods of human evolution, different fashions have prevailed.

The word 'evolution' has been in existence for centuries. Yet there are very few people who can realize its true import. Most times it is the prejudice that has stood in the way of its true comprehension. Religious fanaticism, consequent rancour, and jingoistic cheap patriotism have been some of the obstacles that have stood in the way. Otherwise it stands to reason that arts, that are the special sign-mark of human evolution, should have been read as such. They must naturally evolve with the human being himself. The same holds true in the case of tribes, nations and the world.

Everywhere when new values emerge, they first manifest themselves in the fine arts. Inspiration itself follows the same course. The inner interest of a human being determines his inspiration. No man is inspired by anything for which he has no feeling. That is how feeling has become determinant, as far as arts are concerned.

Let us illustrate. There was a time when man was like his brother animal, interested only in his immediate needs and how to satisfy them. All his feelings naturally were concerned only with that problem. Not only handicrafts, but even the cave-paintings, by and by arose out of those needs. It took thousands of years before man's inspiration could reach what we now call Fine Arts. Man built his thatch for utility to hide his head, and never dreamt that one day the art of architecture would arise out of his rude and crude efforts to provide a refuge from sun and rain.

The same is the story of all arts. The more ideal they are, the longer time they have taken to emerge.

It is not only that we judge man's place in evolution from



his art; but in the same manner he also indicates what objects at a certain stage are most likely to inspire his creation.

The earlier art deals with, and is the outcome also, of a relationship. At that stage, it is more utilitarian like a handicraft than an ideal fine art. For a very long time, it never alters its nature or content. It is much later that even human being as a human being evokes man's interest, which likewise continues till any other object in nature that is directly connected with his being, occupies his vision and inspires him.

We know as a matter of fact that 'Nature Poetry' is almost the latest product of the art of poetry.

This brings us from where we started, namely, that different subjects at different times have inspired different human beings according to their levels in evolution.

Almost in our own day, Byron was scorning his contemporaries, Wordsworth included, for choosing insignificant objects for poetising. His eye could not be filled and his interest could not be evoked by either *Mousie* of Burns or *Daisy* of Wordsworth. It was looked down upon to treat an episode that was already in existence, as subject for poetry. It was essential that a great artist must invent his plot.

As early as Quran's coming into existence, its dealing with old episodes was scornfully called "Old Tales"! As to other objects of the Quran that formed captions of the most important chapters, innovations were still more alarming. It did not only take notice of, but gave importance to such contemptible objects as spider, bee, ant, cow etc.

Strange to say, pooh-poohing lasted for a short time. The initiative of this Book was obeyed by the greatest of humanity that came after it. Since then old tales and tiny objects of nature became the most favourable subjects of the poets and even of the scientists. To study ants, bees and spiders, consciously and deliberately, became the fashion of the day and the most favourable studies for centuries. All over Europe, hundreds of the greatest scientific workers—not only Darwin, Maeterlinck and Awebury—took these hints and studied these little insects with great benefit to mankind. Why should they not, when the Quran had an ant to laugh at, great and wise Solomon and his host.

As for "old tales", the most representative poets of the European countries followed the fashion whether he was Dante, Milton, Shakespeare or Goethe.

Shakespeare uses all the extant stories of whole Europe for his dramas, and when they are consumed, he takes up his own country's history to dramatise; but he does not think of inventing plots.

Goethe's typical dramas are not only old stories, but stories that had already been dramatised. The story of *Doctor Faustus* was already dramatised by Marlowe, and *Iphigenia* by one of the great Greek dramatists. Goethe redramatised both the dramas. To an ordinary man it would appear nothing short of plagiarism, but to a discerning eye Faustus of Marlowe and Faustus of Goethe are entirely different things, and so is *Iphigenia* of Euripides in comparison to Goethe's. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is the tale of the Old Testament re-told in verse, but with this difference that Satan is really the hero of *Paradise Lost*.

In short, all are Old Tales. Did they then simply repeat the old stories? Certainly not. The meaning and significance, the point of view and the central interest had all changed. The form was there with a different soul and spirit.

To sum up, our survey of the fine arts shows that as the arts advance, the material and formal importance of the object, i.e., its utility or otherwise from material point of view grow less and less. At the same time, invention of the plot is not a necessary condition. Any existing episode is good enough to inspire the artist to react to it and create.

One thing more: The artist does not care to depict material form of the object or try to describe the matter of the episode in detail, but is attracted only by meaning and significance. The poet does not care to repeat the whole episode. Only the import and significance are cared for.

As far as choice of subject is concerned, our great poet of Sind is in line with the Quran, as have been all the great poets before or after him.

He picks up, like Shakespeare, every extant story and legend of his country and gives us the most significant point in it in his poetic form. As to the objects, he picks up anything



that falls in his way—be it a dried thorn-bush, a swan, a cloud or a yogi walking in the mountains. He does not dream of inventing a plot or searching any particular objects that are supposed to be beautiful, to poetize. The formal side of the object does not concern him. It is only 'significance' that inspires him and he expresses it.

This brings us to the point of view and the level of the artist. In this connection, before advancing any further, we may quote the only man amongst the writers in the first half of the twentieth century, who can justly be called 'a sage' of the West, *viz.*, Hermann Von Keyserling. He deals with this phrase, "Old Tales and Significance" and writes:

"Why are substantial innovations of so little importance from the point of view of human progress?

Because facts derive their vital significance exclusively from the spiritual connection they are related to. And why is it that the spirits that were unoriginal *from the point of innovation have been able to change the world?*

The reason lies in the primacy of inner adjustment which decides upon possible significance. If the adjustment in question has no profounder basis than any previous one, even the newest facts remain devoid of renewing meaning of life. If the inner adjustment, as such, means a deepening then even the oldest facts become endowed with a new significance, and the latter is of such exclusive importance *that the truly Great in history were hostile to originality precisely for this reason.*"

Here someone might say: 'Well, then impressionism is in the orthogenic line of evolution. It cares the least for form'.

The reply is: yes, so far it is. But do the art products express anything else?—say, 'meaning' or 'significance' (that is higher than meaning).

Does it express anything that may move us as Beauty does?

This also must not be confounded with a case in which the external form is of essence, and is significance itself.

### 5th Test: VIEW-POINT

Choice of subject brings us to 'point of view' of the artist. Here the role is reverted; the subject turns to be the object and the artist himself becomes the subject, experiencing the object that inspires him.

It was said: "The eye only sees what it knows." We may add: "The subject only picks up where its interest lies." The interest again depends upon the view-point, the view-point depends upon the level the artist occupies.

The net result is that experiencing the same object, every artist finds a different significance in it. This has given rise to the generalisation that art means significance. But it is not sufficiently recognized that the significance does not mean the same significance for every one. Every artist sees a different significance according to his own level. "When we say 'the world', it does not mean the same thing for everyone. Everyone understands something quite different by the word." So says good Gurdjieff. But it is not so only in case of the word 'world'. Exactly the same way, every sight and sound, even every taste and smell, has a different content, a different association and a different significance for every one who experiences it. The same rule applies to all the creative artists.

To simplify this problem in order to discover the level and quality of every artistic creation, we also fix up certain tests by which we judge.

Before everything else, we ask: "Has an art-creation unity?" When this question is settled, we judge, like everything else, its three dimensions—breadth, depth and height.

Here, '*en passant*' we might mention that the subject in hand is so abstruse, and this side of it so little explored, that we might be excused for further expatiation. More books have been written on art in the last century than on any other subject. They amount to thousands. Here we make no attempt to digest those. But even if we were to do so, it will leave the reader guessing.

There is a book called "Varieties of Religious Experience" by William James, by which he tries to wake the Western



interest in religion. But there does not exist even a book on "Varieties of Aesthetic Experience". In fact, for the ordinarily educated man the be-all-and-end-all of Aesthetics is the sense of the external. It goes no further.

What we want is, to provide the reader with a simple and comprehensive view that will help him to understand intelligently the works of art he comes by and value them accordingly.

To begin with, a simple illustration will serve our purpose. When an apple is presented to the onlookers, one is absorbed in the skin and colour of the apple; the eye of the other notes its form; the third marks the aroma of it; the fourth is interested in its taste; while the fifth observes it as a whole and his eye has reached the seed.

The same way it happens when we look at a human face. While one is moved by its colour and form, the other already has a peep of its mind. The third has no concern with either but sees the spirit that governs the human being, and is moved only by that. This is what we wanted to clear when we talked of unity and the dimensions of a work of art.

To start with, we say a few words about UNITY. When I experience an object and it evokes interest in me at first sight, I mark some significance without any conscious effort. If the emotion is strong enough, it reacts in some form or the other, and I express what I have felt about it. If I am capable to express myself effectively, it affects the other onlookers more or less in the same way, if their levels are some where near to mine. If not, they experience certain emotion at their own levels. Supposing, instead of immediate and spontaneous reaction I would have become self-conscious and found an interval to analyse the object or the content of my own experience, the product would not have been genuine art, but would only have disclosed the analysis of the object visualised. This, because the unity of experience would have been interrupted. This process provides material for theory-making.

Here we might as well ask: Why did the analytic look creep in? And why was the synthetic look disturbed? Or, to put it in other words, why did it fail to qualify itself as an aesthetic experience?

Here we deal with a most important factor. A simile might help us to understand. It is the quality of light that we command that makes all the difference. Strong light concentrated at one point, not only discloses the object as a whole but helps to shut out other objects from view; while weak and diffused light only discloses shadowy dimensions—a part here and a part there, all too indistinctly—and our 'seeing' may as well be called 'groping'. For example, I look at an apple, mark a red patch, then a patch of yellow, then the connection with the stem, then the way it hangs, and so bit by bit I examine it. This look of mine is an 'analytic' look and my knowledge is 'relative'. The relationship of parts, but nothing about the beauty of the whole. How different would it have been if without conscious discrimination of parts, the apple as a whole would have suddenly disclosed itself to my view with all its significance and moved me, absorbing my whole being, and not only one faculty after another. That indeed would have amounted to aesthetic vision.

It might be easily asked: "But what is a whole"? 'Whole' and 'Part' are relative terms. 'The hand', as an object, is a 'whole', and yet it is a part of a bigger whole, and so is a finger. Every object is a whole and yet a part. The answer to this is that we are not concerned here with objects in their objective existence, but how we experience them.

Also it comes to this, that the breadth and the depth of view bestow the capacity to integrate, and the more this increases the larger becomes the whole to be experienced at a glance.

### 6th Ed. UNITY IN ART

Having arrived so far, now let us quote only one example of the ancient thought about this unity. We have heard of the dramatic unities of Aristotle. He said that unities of space, time and action were necessary and a fundamental condition of a good drama, and that no drama was worth calling a work of art unless it satisfied this requirement.

We know, how for so many centuries the Greek scholars jeered at every one who dared to write a drama and transgress



the Aristotelian unities. To this extent was this taken for granted, that French critics laughed at Shakespeare even in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries for having outrageously disregarded this doctrine of the greatest Greek philosopher.

The controversy, as far as we know, still exists. There are people who still strongly hold this view exactly as Aristotle did. Anyhow, a little thinking will assure us that we cannot blame those who do so. It will be unwise to say that their assertion holds no truth at all. Very many do see some wisdom in it and find some truth. Even if this be a partial statement of truth, it is not quite wrong for them to think that Aristotle was not wrong. They only fail to understand that neither Shakespeare, as a great creative genius, could be wrong. Most of the people, unable to decide, still feel that they derive much more satisfaction from a drama of Shakespeare who disregards unities, than even from a drama of divine Aeschylus who sticks to them.

So here is a great puzzle. Some admire one and hold on to him, and some admire the other and would have him; while some admire both and do not know how to resolve the difference, and reconcile the disparity that exists between their views.

Now let us go behind the statement ourselves and see if we can find some solution.

We know that in this world nothing exists without form, whether created by God or by man. Form is a necessity of every creation. Leaving art aside, let us for a moment see how human language came into existence. Let us analyse the process.

When I express any desire and say "I want to go home" I have given expression to my thought. In other words, I have endowed my thought with a linguistic form. I might have said: "Want..... I.... home.... go." But the grammarians, after having too many utterances at their disposal, arrived at a generalisation that the first utterance was much more perfect, rounded and easier to understand, so they framed a general rule grammar that the subject must precede the predicate, and that the object must follow. That

rule having been framed, if an utterance does not conform to it we say it is ungrammatical and wrong and displays illiteracy.

Now we see how rules are made. Rules are not made before a form comes into being, but after more than one form is available for a discerning choice. The general principles are deductions arrived at still later.

A rule-maker, then, whether he be Aristotle or any one else, comes into being much after the form creators have done their work. Such being the case, we can easily see, that the key to the process is the availability of forms to choose from, and that when better forms come into being the rules will have to modify themselves.

Smaller men stick to forms for centuries and delight in following the rules, and when a great man suddenly appears and creates new forms and breaks their rules, they laugh at him. This holds true throughout the evolving universe in all its phases, and in the world of man too, in every branch of his activity.

A framer of rules, systems and modes, is a minor figure in comparison to a creator of forms. So in this particular respect, we have to bring Aristotle down from that pedestal of eminence. He only plays the second fiddle, while Shakespeare in his own category is far above him.

But even as a second fiddle, Aristotle undoubtedly is a most remarkable one. None has done his part better than he. Therefore, it is necessary for us to examine his rule with great vigilance, as it must contain some important truth. He must have sorted the dramatic samples of his day, by discrimination picked out the best one, generalised its outstanding features, and asked the world to keep his choice as a model.

One point must not be over-looked. Aristotle too must have loved a particular work of art, before consciously trying to find out why he loved it. It is love for something beautiful that sets the ball rolling. That is our primary guide. He found that his beloved drama had those attributes of unity, and the one he did not like and considered defective lacked those attributes. In this way, he naturally framed the rule about unities.



But when finer forms have become available to us and what is more, moved us more strongly than the old ones which Aristotle had, we found that there was a deeper principle at work than what the analysis of Aristotle could detect.

Now we are in a position to say that it was not a particular kind of unity as he thought, but the unity of vision, the unity of point of view that *seems to be the essential sine qua non of every genuine art-creation.*

The same thing we find in Shakespeare who disregards the Aristotelian unities. It is not the unity of this, that and the other, as an analyst would make us believe, but the unity of vision—*how much an aesthete can absorb at one glance.* The breadth of vision and the comprehensiveness of it are in Shakespeare far beyond that of the classical Greek dramatists. Time and space had a greater mastery over the ancients than over Shakespeare.

Aristotle naturally feels the necessity of some sort of organic unity without which neither individuality nor life can be bestowed on any creation. However, it is not the limitation set by space and time, but the limitation of vision that matters. Unity of vision is necessary, but no unity of any other kind need worry us.

Shakespeare joins and moulds different periods and different places of action in one whole but still remains in his own 'world', while Kalidasa unites earth and heaven in his great play *Shakuntala*. Still *Shakuntala* remains a superb example of dramatic art, and no reader fails to be impressed by its unity and beauty. In support of our opinion, we cannot do better than quote a line of Goethe's generous praise of *Shakuntala* that has since become almost a classic:

Willst du Erde und Himmel

Mit einen Namen begreifen,

Nenn' ich Sahakuntala Dich

and dann ist alles gesagt

Wouldst thou the earth and heaven  
in one sole name combine

Then I name thee Shakuntala  
and then all is said.

It is thus easy for us now to generalise further than Aristotle could, and adumbrate a more broad and fundamental principle governing other examples than what Aristotle had, and arrive at a better understanding than was possible for him.

Organic unity is fundamental for a living individualised art-creation, but not the unity of space, time and action as conceived by Aristotle.

For further elucidation on this point, we shall have to say a few words about the term "sensuous," specially because Milton's use of it as defining poetry to be "sensuous, simple and passionate," has made it important.

Very few people realise that the line between 'sensuous' and 'super-sensuous' is not so distinct as it is supposed to be by them. With this point we shall deal while discussing the dimensions of art.

## DIMENSIONS OF ART

Generally in judging a creative artist, the bulk of his output is considered, and unless this is considerable, he is not supposed to be a genuine artist. But mere bulk does not necessarily indicate greatness or genuineness of the artist.

A prolific journalist, who produces forty penny love stories, practically repeating some common human experience without any further meaning or even variation of form and content, can hardly be called an artist. So bulk by itself is clearly not a determinant factor, and should not be considered as a criterion.

By 'breadth' we mean how much of universal life an artist covers in his creation, and how many variations of the same theme he provides, disclosing newer and newer aspects.

By 'depth' we mean how far his insight reaches. Is he skimming the surface or has he power to fathom the depths.

To illustrate: We compare the entire nature to a book. One reader is attracted by the beauty of formal expression and goes into ecstasies about it. The other straightaway reaches the 'idea' that is incarnated by it. The third is not conscious of either, but is moved by beauty which he cannot understand but which shakes him to the core. For convenience, we



might say that he is moved by the beautiful spirit of the book, and feels exalted by it. This exaltation we call 'height'.

This is not the place to deal with dimensions of Latif's art in detail. Only a few words must suffice here; fuller treatment could only be undertaken when the text itself is treated.

As to the breadth of Latif's art, there is nothing too small or too mean in nature that does not sympathetically attract his notice. He makes loving use of a crow as a messenger, as much as of the moon herself. He sings of the 'Swan-song' so touchingly. A song that not one man in a century gets an opportunity to hear in these parts. The entire local literature, or any literature, that could have been possibly available in his day does even make a mention of such a song. It can only have been a personal experience because of his life in woods and hills, and his habit of keeping up nights long without sleep.

He deals with the life of a fisherman, a spinner, a peasant, and a prince with equal ease and familiarity. He speaks so perfectly in their idiom and phrase that one feels as if he entirely belonged to their class. When he deals with man, woman or child, he becomes one himself.

As to the depth, we have already mentioned that his eye immediately reaches the heart of nature, taking little notice of its temporary forms. One sign of the depth of his art is quite enough to disclose his position. That is, he sees the universe as an absolutely 'One Whole'; the manyness leaves him cold.

As to the height, we know no man, however practical-minded or even un-educated, who does not forget himself for the time-being when reading or hearing Latif's poetry and is not exalted above himself.

About the heights that the poet has scaled, we shall be saying a word later. Without any further expatiation on this most important and abstruse point on which volumes could be written, we pass on to 'technique'.

## TECHNIQUE

The question is generally put: Is technique an integral part of inspiration or separate from it? The reply is, both. Some forms of art require more material and time than

others. For example, Architecture needs so much material and time to express itself. The inspiration that started it, might keep on developing and altering. Besides, the material available affects the situation. What marble could do in one case, could not be achieved with cement and bricks in other case. The same applies to Sculpture, though in a little lesser degree.

Next comes Painting. There the materials are not so heavy and not so difficult to procure. The time to execute could be shorter, and also less physical energy is necessary than in the two former arts. And yet, by the nature of it, most time the expression is not immediate.

Next comes Poetry. Here no materials are necessary except the formation of linguistic word-forms. Also, luckily, no outside instruments are wanted. Therefore, expression after inspiration can be immediate, with this difference that with some verse writers words do not come ready-made and are not spontaneous. Also the search of word and phrase, and more than that, the thought of keeping to a well-known form, interfere with immediacy. This does not rule out the cases in which the words come readily and spontaneously without conscious search for them and without a thought to follow any form and rule.

The last is Music. If the creation is worthy of its name, mere sounds are necessary, and they come as spontaneously and naturally as striking a metal produces them. The reaction to the inspiration expresses itself in sounds that are found to be not only harmonious but also melodious. To bring this point home to the reader, we can do no better than quote a few words from the biographer of Mozart:

"Born with absolute pitch, Infalible rhythm and natural comprehension of harmony Master Mozart had come into this world with an inexplicable complete gift. That is how at the age of four the child began to learn to play the Klavier, and at five years picked up a violin and could read music at sight. This child read and wrote notes before he could do as much with letters. Compositions dating from his sixth year are recognisable from the opening bars as the music of Mozart and no one else.



"This man, as history has proved, was the greatest musical genius of modern European music." This should help the reader to understand what we have been talking about immediacy, absence of self-consciousness and spontaneity of expression.

The work of art must possess harmony and accord. It must require the least outside help to express itself. It must be immediate as far as possible, and not lose time between inspiration and execution.

It is said that all art worthy of its name, must participate of music. The more an art-creation resembles music, the more genuine it is. The resemblance has to be in all aspects.

So we see clearly that all art in the end comes to be judged by how much it participates of true music. It was, therefore, that Carlyle had said that poetry unless capable of being sung, was no poetry at all.

That is why Mozart also said that the test of great music is not to delineate emotion in sound, what he calls "Maleri" (Painting), but spontaneous 'outflow of feeling' without any conscious thought. He also added, that harmony that one deliberately writes to accompany a melody, has always a wooden leg.

Hafiz, the great Persian poet said almost the same thing: "One whom you consider the master, if you look with correct insight, you find he is a craftsman who has not the flowing disposition."

All these utterances of great masters boil down to the same thing—*genuine inspiration and immediate response of the artist*. The more the time and the conscious activity intervene, the less the expression will express aestheticism.

## gkh: INSPIRATION

Before closing this discussion on 'technique' we must make it clear to the reader that although it is true that the same object raises different emotions and brings different significance to different persons according to their levels, we must however never lose sight of the fact that every art

creation has to have some form, must convey some idea and make of beauty. This applies to all creations of art.

To illustrate, we may cite examples of a few great artists and their particular ways.

Goethe's method, for instance, was, as he himself suggests, a younger artists, that when any object inspired him, he did not immediately express himself, but he worked on the body of the theme with full consciousness and made a special preparation for it. So much so that he advises that knowledge about the object in hand, before working it out, may be acquired from extraneous sources, to make the treatment complete and comprehensive.

No wonder then, that the word 'poetscraft' came into vogue in Western philascology, and nothing unnatural is found about it.

Goethe was an omnivorous reader like Milton. He suffered from Milton only in this, that Milton like a goldsmith, after roughly constructing the ornament, picks up a jewel from here and a jewel from there, to finish it up and then polishes it. While Goethe is like a lapidary, who puts all his tools round himself, and sits to cut, shape and polish the facets of a diamond.

The case of Shakespeare is different from them both. His art grows and develops like a plant, and blossoms suddenly appearing on the top of the twig whose coming into being and manner of metamorphosis are all but unknown.

To clear up the position, let us quote here a passage from Professor Bradley, who had a true peep, as far as the West is concerned, and has risen above the idea of 'poetscraft'. He says:

"Pure poetry is not the decoration or a preconceived and clearly defined matter. It springs from the creative impulse of a vague imaginative mass, pressing for development and definition. If the poet always knew exactly what he meant to say, why should he write the poem? The poem would in fact already be written, for only its completion can reveal, even to him, exactly what he wanted. When he began, and while he was at work, he did not possess its meaning. It possessed him.... And



this is the reason why such poems strike us as *manufactures*, and have the magical effect which decoration cannot produce. This is also the reason why if we insist on asking for the meaning of such a poem, we can only be answered, 'It means itself.'

Browning, when asked what his poems meant, used to reply that he did not know; it was for the reader to find out what they meant.

Having so far cleared the general position of art, we are much more able to understand the way of Shah Abdul Latif and his poetry.

At the very start it may be said, that our poet had not the slightest mind either to write poetry, or be called a poet. As a matter of fact, he never wrote a single line of his utterance himself. He is never known to have sat down to compose a verse. It was always the people who surrounded him who immediately took down his verses while he was in an ecstatic condition, hardly conscious of his own being.

To describe one scene out of so many as an example, the start was made when some of the musicians present played instrumental music without words from the well-known *raga* that were current in the country in those days. Those who know Indian music know that each '*raga*' has its own particular time of the day or night to be played. The same rule was observed here.

The music brought on an ecstatic mood in the poet, so that his poetry was uttered and sung there and then by himself. There was no question of deliberate composition. There was no time lost, and no interval occurred in the process, if process it could be called.

The music became the vehicle by which he conveyed his words, words that were literally packed with transcendental music of their own and had unique mystical significance which is still in the course of being comprehended. Strange to say that the inherent music of the lines surpassed the music that accompanied them, and therefore, in this case music became the vehicle of poetry.

Every one knows, that verses or a libretto are made vehicles or bases for music in the East and West. To this extent is this

is granted, that the words of a song are not supposed to convey any deeper meaning so as to attract notice to themselves and make music a secondary thing. It is often said, then about the loveliest opera that exists in the West, namely the *Magic Flute* of Mozart, that the diction on which it is built, is not only trifling, but is "a tissue of absurdities".

Now it is clear that music using poetry, and using it as an attendant on a prince, is the usual rule. In Latif's case the tables are turned. The role of poetry has altered. His poetry, with its inherent transcendental music makes the ordinary music its attendant. A piece of poetry that aspires and strives to make classical music only a vehicle and a secondary thing, does not submit to translation into any other language. The balance maintained between diction, meaning and spirit produces a musical effect impossible to recapture. The utmost that the translator can do is to bring Latif to the mind of the reader by producing his ideas to some extent; unless the translator is an artist who is inspired by the poetry as an object of inspiration and recreates it under the aegis of aestheticism.

## 6th: FORM AND UNITY IN LATIF'S CREATIONS

A few words about the forms that Latif's poetry discloses are necessary.

At the outset it can be said with certainty that he follows no known metre or form. The length of the line the arrangement of the rhyme, the number of lines that form a stanza are all ordered by the mood. No one else nor he himself ever troubled to scan his line, because no one even dreams that he followed any particular form when he was composing it. Strange to say, that his musical methods thrust themselves on the reader's notice. A thematic refrain suddenly appears, and variations are composed on it till the mood expires. What is more important throughout his compositions is, that what is supposed to be *Counter Point* in music is freely occurring. Two melodic themes run side by side to create mystery in mysticism, and double the depth that is already too deep. No attempt therefore, is made by the reader intellectually to analyse the lines, as he is over absorbed by the



aesthetic power and transcendental effect of the line. To try to know the meaning of the line in the usual sense, is to degrade it and kill the significance which is miles above the so-called 'meaning', to which intellect can reach. The height to which it carries the reader is by emotion, unanalysed and unanalysable.

The use of thematic variation and of Counter Point originally belong to the art of highest classical music. Latif has effectively introduced it in his poetry without ever thinking of the words, Counter Point and theme.

We have been talking so much about music that the reader might easily lose sight of the fact that music is governed by the same conditions as all other arts as far as points of view, level of the artist, and breadth and depth to which he reaches, are concerned.

All music is not of the same quality. One could sing a nursery song, or, musical chords of any kind. That is also music.

To revert to our previous illustration, Mozart calls his harmony 'art with a wooden leg', and 'sound-painting' (*Malerei*) and great art in comparison to the spontaneous outpour of the soul in which conscious adjustment does not enter. This must not make us lose sight of the fact that even the greatest composers have been proud of delineating emotion and painting scenes in sound. Compositions of composers as great as Beethoven and Wagner are teeming with them, and they are supposed to be some of the greatest works of art. Yet, to a Mozart who deals not with psychology but with the spirit, 'delineation' appears like halting, limping with a wooden leg, lacking the spontaneous flow of the spirit that is unconcerned with the mind's weaving and its set ideas. Unless his music becomes melodious under that pitch no music satisfies him.

So all music is not of the same kind. There is music and music. Music might bring everyday's emotion to mind, or music might raise us to the divine mysteries and mystical heights where there is hardly place to breathe. It might show us a corner of our household, or it might disclose to us the entire universe at a glance.

Now we come to what we mentioned above as sensual and super-sensuous. We remember what Francis Thompson

once said: "My eyes saw not, yet I saw." This gives us a glimpse of what you would call super-sensuous. Now Latif would go exactly the other way. Cajoling and patting his eyes, he says: "I was looking at a donkey, and yet, my darling eyes would see nothing else but the Beloved" (which means the Creator of all things). Would you call this super-sensuous? Latif gives credit to the eyes, not to himself. This is what we meant when we said 'seeing with different significance even through looking at an ordinary object'. And this too discloses the point of view, the level of the artist, and the depth his soul sees. Latif goes further. He says: "Whenever my 'I' is prominent, I can see nothing; the 'I' must withdraw if anything valuable is to be experienced. Consciousness of 'I' pollutes all other consciousness."

At this juncture we quote a page from *The Adventures of the Brown Girl in Her Search for God* in which the Brown Girl is supposed to introduce Latif to Goethe and also recite lines from his *Risalo*, the lines that abundantly indicate the position of Latif in art, his point of view, and unity or otherwise of his creation. It reads as follows:

"...and Goethe enquired from those present about the fourth, and unknown poet. Hearing this, the Brown Girl, who knew him, came forward and told Goethe that he was called "Latif", and that he deserved to be better known than he really was, and so saying, she recited one of his couplets:

"Neither the control of desire,  
Nor the emotional abandonment  
Concern me any more."

"That is very interesting", said Goethe.  
"Do you know anything else of him?"

Whereupon the Brown Girl continued:

"Where no 'No' and no 'Yes',  
no good and no evil exist,

That still is within the reach of human idea;  
But where that Beauty is that we dote upon,  
No sight can reach there."

Then she went on:

"I have so often remembered his verses in his dramatic



poem called 'Sea-Farers', in which he says,

See that you daily oil your little skiff,  
Which is constantly exposed to water  
In the midst of which it stands....

And these lines always remind me of your Faust who after achieving his life's work, says:

He alone earns freedom as well as life  
Who daily must win them anew."

"Splendid, splendid", said Goethe. "I am longing to come in closer touch with him!"\*

The above shows the view-point of Latif. He is not concerned with biological urges or their controls. He is beyond them. It means, as he says later on, rewards and punishments, hell and heaven, good and bad as such, have no interest nor purpose for him; and even the remotest ideas in their domain which resolve the contraries and put affirmatives and negatives, good and evil out of court, do not attract him.

European Renaissance under Islamic impact is synonymous with Indian Renaissance through the same impulse. It behaves also the same way in both the places. As in Europe 'Stars of Reformation' rise to reform religion, so also in India. As history has well recognised, Ramanuj, Kabir and Nanak belong to that category. After religious reforms, start art and Poetic start is made in India by Tulsidas. He too deals with the 'old tale' of 'Ramayana'. In Europe this impulse reaches Germany last of all, and takes more the form of music than of poetry. The father of that musical impulse is Bach. In India, the last to receive that impulse, is Sind.

Strange as it may appear, Bach and Latif are contemporaries. Bach is born in 1685 and Latif in 1689, four years after. Bach died in 1750 and Latif left this world in 1750 while Mozart is born four years after Latif's death. We have already mentioned some of Mozart's childhood incidents. Latif's childhood is just as breath-taking.

\*Mr. & Mrs. I. I. Kazi: *Adventures of the Brown Girl in Her Search for God* (Companion to the Black Girl of Mr. Bernard Shaw); Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd., London, pp. 76-77.

It is no place here to mention those incidents, as our only purpose is to speak of 'unity' in Latif's creations. The main province of Latif in which he dwells, is 'Beauty'. His 'essence' is so well established that it governs his 'personality' completely even when it becomes 'dual' for a time at adolescence.

It is therefore that every creation of his represents a portion of his life, and at the end all his creations are found integrated in one organic whole, as was his own life.

The integration is so organic that it governs his life, his point of view, his stand and his art creations. All the outcome, as we said, of his 'essence' being the upper-most factor in his life. As the childhood's works of Mozart are distinctly Mozartian, so are Latif's at all stages of his life. No one can mistake the first and the last line as being those of Latif. The quality never changes. The evolution of form and technique, as is usual in an ordinary artist, has never been gone through.

The result is, as is indicated above, that the *Risalo* as a book displays an organic unity, as if the author had planned and designed, when he was five years old how his book would advance and what succession his thirty pieces would have, and how it would end.

It is not the unity in each small creation by itself we are talking of now,—the kind of unity that is usually expected and sought in the creation of any artist—but it is the unity complete and organic of fifty odd years utterances as if by magic becoming organically united, and not only giving a complete picture of the poet's soul at different stages but life of the whole humanity as it would be lived by the highest and the stages it would necessarily pass through when it has been coming into the world with the richest 'hereditary capital'.

So the *Risalo* is at once a 'message' and an 'ideal', and comes under the appellation that Carlyle instinctively guessed and described as follows:

"Another matter it is, however, when symbol has intrinsic meaning and is of itself fit that men would unite round it. "Let but the godlike manifest itself to sense; let but Eternity look more or less visibly through the time-figure (Zeitbild) ....



"Of this latter sort are all true works of art. In them (if thou know a work of art from a daub of artifice) wilt thou discern Eternity looking through Time; the godlike rendered visible.... Highest of all symbols are those wherein the artist or poet has risen into prophet."

Here Carlyle in his own way confirms that the greatest work of art would be a 'message' (*Risalo*). By prophet, he does not mean that he would bring some new news to us; but in his own unique way would provide us with the 'Ideal' with which human destiny is linked with the Divine, and help to lead us on to it. It is, therefore, that Latif says:

"These that you think to be poetic verses, are signposts that give you glimpses of Eternal Beauty and set your heart in motion to seek the Divine."

We said, Latif was a poet born not made, and he brought most things as heritage from Eternity. Yes! we said Latif came with 'the richest hereditary capital'.

By that, we did not, and do not mean that he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth; but with the divine finger linked in his little finger, the glorious finger that he clung to with his heart and soul all his life dotingly, and parted from this world only to be still nearer to the Divine.

### SOME VERSES FROM 'RISALO'

For the benefit of the reader, having no acquaintance with the language of the poet, and being debarred from having access to the original, we give here a few verses from the *Risalo*, picked at random without any connection with the episodes they belong to, relying all the time on the fact that the reader is one of those who is able to see from a straw which way the wind blows.

We have already dwelt long enough on the fact that, by and by, *Form* is being reduced to nullity, and even *Meaning* is being not so much insisted upon as the *Spirit*, which, in other words, may be called 'significance'.

It is not difficult to understand that to a knowing man a little finger is not only adequate to indicate clearly to what species it belongs, but even what sort of individual it is of

whose hand it forms a part. He can read in it the character of the person to whom it belongs. He can make out whether he is an artist or a peasant and a great deal more which to an ordinary man is a closed book.

We have already said that *the cryptic, the enigmatic and the idyllic* have here formed a wonderful whole for those who understand.

We do agree that for an ordinary man 'Form' alone counts. It is necessary for him to hear a tale from beginning to end, or else he understands nothing. It was, therefore, that Rumi undertook to express his ideas and meaning in story-form. Every smallest idea was illustrated and explained in an embodied form of a story with 'flesh and blood'.

In case of our poet, it is exactly the opposite. He likes to pour a whole river in a small pitcher and believes with the Persian poet that to a wise man hints are more than books, while to a dullard even books will mean nothing.

It is in this hope, that we are providing here stray verses from the *Risalo* rendered into English by Elsa Kazi. She has tried to retain the metrical form of the poet.

In "Infinitude" I toss,

O Guide! no bound perceive mine eyes

Tortuous beauty of the Loved

has no limit, has no size;

Here intensive longing lies,  
there the loved ones do not care.

—*Asa*: Hope

No one who loaded is with 'Self'  
the other side will see;

For God is One and Oneness loves,  
so spurn duality;

And all thy anxious tears, 'to be',  
shed at altar of unity.

—*Asa*: Hope



Those very tiny eyes of mine  
 great favours did to me;  
 For when to look at donkeys,  
 I did raise them casually,  
 They even then refused to see,  
 ought but Beloved's face.

—Asa: Hope

Beloved! hold the 'I' near 'Thee',  
 All self-concern I've cast from me,  
 Protector mine! with 'duality' .....  
 I wasted far too many days.

—Asa: Hope

Every man knows where he is,  
 I know not where I stand:  
 Guides and books there many are,  
 and they are close at hand;  
 But I seek the distant land  
 where 'yes' and 'no' are not.

—Asa: Hope

'Yes', and 'no', still within reach  
 of human 'Idea' are;  
 But beyond all vision far  
 is the Beauty that I seek.

—Asa: Hope

Whose body is a rosary.  
 the mind a bead, a harp the heart,  
 Love's strings are playing there the theme  
 of 'Unity' in every part;  
 The nerves do chant: "there's none like thee  
 the One and only One thou art—"  
 E'en sleeping, Beauty they impart,  
 their very sleep their worship is.

—Asa: Hope

A moonlit night, an open plain,  
 and so far yet to go;  
 My camel! look not back, for you  
 't is shame to waver so;  
 Be steady, resolute, and show  
 My loved ones you can reach.

—Khambhat: Haven

I must go where my love resides,  
 to the Beloved speed;  
 There I will give thee sandal wood  
 and thou shalt no more feed  
 On salt-bush coarse, unfit for thee,  
 or any worthless weed....  
 O hasten! there is urgent need  
 to reach while night doth last.

—Khambhat: Haven

Arise, and take a foward step  
 be not an idler base—  
 The highway to my Love is straight  
 and has no winding ways;  
 Self-pity drop—a gallop raise,  
 to bring us swift and soon.

—Khambhat: Haven

He goes not with the herd of late,  
 and no more will he graze;  
 Since Cupid's arrow wounded him,  
 he hugs a curious craze;  
 To his new love with love-sick gaze  
 he crawls defying death.

—Khambhat: Haven

I fettered him with rope and chain,  
 but shackles were in vain,  
 He broke them all, and dragged them on  
 where creepers decked the plain;  
 O God, put sense and understanding  
 in this camel's brain—  
 With mercy free him from this pain,  
 to rise above this curse.

—Khambhat: Haven

Offer not precious stones to those  
 who know not gold from brass;  
 To true jewellers in exchange  
 your jewels you may pass....  
 Ah, those who deal in gold, the mass  
 of metals base they spurn.



The glass-beads are in fashion now  
 real pearls no more appeal;  
 My tunic's full of truth, yet feel  
 ashamed to offer it !

—Samudi: Sea-farer

The glorious yogis in this world,  
 some 'Fire' bring, some 'Light'—  
 They who burn themselves to 'ignite',  
 I cannot live without them !

—Ramkali: Yogis

With hunger yogis stock their bags,  
 preparing for a revelry;  
 By tempting foods they are not moved,  
 and out they pour so greedily  
 The 'thirst' to drink; their minds they flog  
 until like beaten flax they be,  
 So through long wastes they wade to see  
 at last fertility and life.

—Ramkali: Yogis

Why are you sitting mourning here ?  
 my darling swan ! arise;  
 Go, enter now the waters clear,  
 and seek with watchful eyes . . .  
 Search not on banks, the banks despise,  
 despise the vulgar lanes.

—Karayal: Swan

The swans divine are those who pick  
 the pearls from waters pure;  
 They never soil their beaks with mud  
 some fishes to secure;  
 World knows them not, they are obscure  
 in crowds of cormorants.

—Karayal: Swan

The lovely peacocks all are dead,  
 and not one swan I see;  
 Alas, the crafty snipes instead  
 have here their homeland made.

—Karayal: Swan.

The Echo and the Call are same,  
 if you sound's secret knew—  
 They both were "one", but "two" became,  
 only when 'hearing' came.

—Yaman Kalyan: Peace

If you call yourself a moth,  
 then come, put out the fire's sway;  
 Passion has so many baked,  
 but you roast passion's self today—  
 Passion's flame with 'knowledge' slay,  
 but that to base folks pass not on !

—Yaman Kalyan: Peace

Master the lesson thoroughly  
 that 'Law' doth teach Sohni . . .  
 Then contemplate and meditate,  
 So 'Truth' comes near to thee;  
 But Reality's vision will be  
 reward of lovers true !

—Sohni

A drowning man by grasses  
 at the banks will hold  
 Oh see the chivalry  
 the slender straws unfold !  
 To hold him they'll make bold,  
 or else with him will sink.

—Sohni

With longing I lay down, my eyes  
 Did wake and found no sleep—  
 But when at last I slept, he came  
 and then I could not rise;  
 Sisters ! I erred, for in what wise  
 is longing kin to sleep ?

—Sastri

Almighty God ! let it not be  
 That I in bondage die  
 Enchained my body night and day  
 doth weep in misery—  
 Oh let me first my homeland see  
 and then my days let end.

—Marui



A messenger arrives, to me  
 authentic news conveys;  
 "Do not forget your distant love,  
 and do not die", he says:  
 "You will reach home, only few days  
 you in this fort may stay."

—*Marui*

Good were the days that I in pain  
 in tortuous prison passed;  
 Storms roared above me threateningly,  
 and cries for help were vain—  
 But lo! my love by prison-chain  
 was chastened, purified!

—*Marui*

Rain preparations are again  
 in progress everywhere;  
 Again the lightnings have begun  
 to leap with arduous flare;  
 Some towards Istanbul do dive,  
 some to the West repair;  
 Some over China glisten, some  
 of Samargand take care;  
 Some wander to Byzantium, Kabul,  
 some to Kandhar fare;  
 Some lie on Delhi, Deccan, some  
 reach Gimar, thund'ring there;  
 And greens on Bikanir pour those  
 that jump from Jesalmare;  
 Some Bhuj have soaked, others descend  
 on Dhat, with gentle air,  
 Some crossing Umerkote have made  
 the fields fertile and fair,  
 O God, may ever you on Sind  
 bestow abundance rare;  
 Beloved! all the world let share  
 Thy Grace, and fruitful be!

—*Sarang: Monsoon*

Though 'inside' all is overcast,  
 'outside' from every cloud is free—  
 Lightnings mature within, in whom  
 Love doth reside eternally....

Their eyes shall never rainless be  
 in whom thought of Beloved reigns.

—*Sarang: Monsoon*

No wave the path of those can stay,  
 who worship the sublime;  
 Effect of their 'repentance' makes  
 them safely swim away;  
 Propped by 'Reliance absolute'  
 they pass wild current's sway—  
 By 'Perfect Sailor' met were they  
 in mid-current, as guide!

—*Samudi: Sea-farers*

Boatman! upon the raging sea, both ways  
 you cannot have  
 Whole nights you sleep resting your back  
 on rudder carelessly:  
 But there across, at morn they'll be,  
 and of your doings ask!

—*Samudi: Sea-farers*

With falsehood I did pass my days,  
 divine commands I broke;  
 The vessel overflows with sin,  
 and with my doings base....  
 O Knower of the secret ways,  
 Thou know'st already all.

—*Samudi: Sea-farers*

Upon the waters transparent,  
 along the banks float lotus flowers,  
 And all the lake rich fragrance showers,  
 as sweet as musk, when spring-winds blow.

—*Kamod: Love sick.*



## Translator's Notes as an aid, especially to a Western Reader.

Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit is a very great Poet and his art in one sense "impressionist par excellence". Incidents, episodes, legends, subjects of observation are not related as stories; only their significance is expressed in poems that deal with higher evolution of man. These episodes and legends employed by Latif, are but the pegs on which he hangs his divine themes. With the aid of the 'Beautiful in Nature', he leads the reader to have longing for the 'Union with God', Who always is the Beloved, in his poems.

These incidents and episodes are called 'Surs' (musical themes), as if only the hidden music of all, that is seen and felt, is taken note of and expressed. In all, the poet deals with 29 such episodes or themes. We will deal with them one after the other in succession.

### 1. Kalyan.

The first 'Sur' is called 'Kalyan'. The word means 'Peace'. As usual with Muslims, this 'Sur' starts with the praise of Creator Who created this Universe and is the only Lord of the Universe. He is the Compassionate, the Unique, the Loving, the Original, the Ruler with innate powers, the Giver, and Sustainer of every thing and without a partner. He is also the Generous, Who doth create the Universe in Pairs. 'Pairs' does not necessarily mean 'male and female' but what is called antinomies in philosophy. 'Negative and positive' too falls under it.

For guidance and obedience, Mohammad is to be accepted with love. From One, 'many' have come, and so, 'many' is but 'Oneness', just as the echo and the call are same, but became two, when hearing came. Thus, 'Reality is one'. Being is one.

'No pain, no gain' is a divine decree. Without self sacrifice no one can get to the Beloved. All is sweet from His side if tasted with discrimination.

This 'Sur' is a foundational melody in music, that is played to produce the feeling of perfect peace. It is the peace that belongs to childhood's innocence, unconcerned about all that causes worry and self-consciousness in years to follow.



## 2. Yaman Kalyan.

'Yaman Kalyan' means the peace earned after the mind becomes conscious and starts questioning about the things around. This is also a name of a musical thematic melody.

The Poet says that mere book-reading will not convey anything to you; first purify your own being. The unuttered is unknown. What is not said cannot be known; and the uttered, be it as pure as gold, will never be understood or taken note of by man, unless he is ready to absorb. Further, we should not return vile words, but remain silent. This is a 'pearl', we see in 'The Guide's Teachings'. Patience is the cure and anger a disease. Forget and forgive the offender. Kill the 'Ego' with silence. Keep a 'Lawyer' within yourself, so that you may not blush when facing the 'Judge'. The Beloved Himself becomes physician for one who is wounded by His love. The Poet also advises a lover to go to the moth to learn the sweet way of immolation and rub the fire's sway out. 'Passion' has baked many, he says, but you roast Passion itself. Slay passion with knowledge.

## 3. Khambhat.

'Khambhat' is a name of a port, also of a melody in music. It suggests a 'Haven of Refuge'. In this 'Sur' the poet deals with adolescence, never losing sight of childhood days, when conflict had not arisen, and when God alone engaged his mind—the name of God and love for Him, he has inherited from his fathers.

The Poet compares the body with a 'camel', who is always turning round to flesh desires. The Poet reproaches it: "Look not back. It is shame for you to waver so. Be steady and resolute." A man who, after putting his shoulders to the plough, wavers, is not worthy of the "Kingdom of Heaven". The 'animal' signifies the body. The mind and soul seek God, yet body looks back. Some one advises him to make a strong rope and bind the camel: that is, create controls.

## 4. Sorath.

'Sorath' is a name of a queen and also of a melody in music. It was also a name of a region, now called Junagadh, in Kathiawar, after the name of the queen.

The king Rai Diyach is enchained by a woman, 'Sorath', who allegorically signifies all the glamour of the world. One day a minstrel comes, who plays so wonderfully, that the king wants to give him all the

treasures of the world. The minstrel refuses to accept. "I only want your head", he says. The king promises it, and keeps his word. The minstrel takes the head. The king's tents have been removed to another place. All music is dead. Suddenly, then, there is a cry: "Sorath is dead". At this moment, the minstrel restores the head to the king. This means that the king has now a different mind, as Sorath, who held him downward, is dead; his mind is cleared of her. Then the heavenly music is heard again and all are happy.

## 5. Asa.

'Asa' is a name of a melody in music, stirring the feeling of 'hope' in us.

The poet says that 'hope' always goes with us, either unconsciously, or very palpably in developed human beings. This 'Sur' deals with a 'Godlover' who is troubled by Duality. He desires to keep his 'Self', his 'I', away, as he doth not care for personality. He wants to submit entirely to 'Him', his Beloved. Such submission is difficult in a world, where at every step temptations are lurking. "No one, who is loaded with 'self', will ever see the other side", means that one with 'self' will never see 'Heaven'. So the poet says: "Destroy coarse multiplicity with Unity".

The problem for the lover is that the Beloved has bound him and threw him in deep-water, saying: 'now avoid getting wet'. 'How could I do that?' The solution suggested is that without neglecting 'law' one should go on contemplating and get one's heart used to Reality.

The Poet further advises that one should be with strong hope, implicit faith, utter resolution, and keeping a divine 'Lawyer' within one's soul so as not to blush on judgement day.

'Hope' goes with us everywhere, without our knowing it, but in great minds it lies in the soul like a 'Prophet' that tells us, that there is an after life, in which the pure ones will become members of the 'Angelic Host'.

## 6. Pirbhati.

'Pirbhati' is a name of a melody which means 'pertaining to Dawn', because it is sung at dawn.

The Poet advises the musician not to roam about and play music to others for petty rewards. He tells him, "Go to 'The King' for things of genuine worth. He gives gifts to undeserving ones: will He not to the deserving? Caste is no more consideration with Him. But He reproaches



those who approach others than Himself. Sing to Him when the morning star arises lest He may turn away."

### 7. Ramkali.

'Ramkali' means 'divine bud'. This 'Sur' deals with 'divines'—human beings with divine qualities. They are glorious ones in the world, some being 'fire', while others, 'light'. The poet cries out, "I cannot live without them. I was sleeping and they woke me with a 'sigh'—those saintly ones, who did give their last crust to the needy ones and will have nothing for themselves,—how can I live without them."

### 8. Khahori.

The word 'Khahori' means wanderers in mountains in search of 'food'. The poet tells us that Khahoris have returned, covered with 'dust'. What land they came from, no one knows. They seek 'the land' that no one hath known or heard of. Upon dusty, stony ground they sleep. They proceed to seek the 'Light', and seek it from Infinity. In cold biting wind they weep like rain, with longing for Divinity. They carry 'water bags', without water. They are deaf to every thing, want to hear the call of 'Reality'. They wear torn rags as their sign mark. They gave up all for 'Lahut' i.e. 'Reality'. Those, who came to know bare hills of 'Ganjo', care no more for harvests. They long to become 'Lahutis'.

### 9. Purab.

The word 'Purab' means 'east' or 'direction of Light'. This 'Sur' lays emphasis on 'training' for fitness.

Messages, in olden times, used to be carried by trained crows. Here 'a crow' is sent with 'a message' to the Loved One, and comes back with 'good news'. But the advice is: "Don't make messengers out of those who eat carrion. Give your message to a thoroughly equipped and clean messenger."

"In longing for my loved one", says the poet, "I roam around. Oh, at midnight, Eastern yogis closed their house, to build a future one. They are already on highway: I find none to complain. While advising the world, I lost myself my mind." A warning is given: "Don't call yourself 'Sami' (Saint), as you are not trained."

"If you want to keep your greedy body fit, beg for grains but do not pretend."

### 10. Bilawal.

'Bilawal' is a name of a melody in music. In this 'Sur' the attitude of 'a Generous and Compassionate Ruler' is allegorically described.

The poet speaks thus: "Drive vulgar crowds out of your house and make peace with 'The Sovereign', so that you receive gifts every day. Arise to find the saints' presence. The kettledrums break; they are hollow inside. Call on no one but on your true guide. All chieftains stand aghast. There they 'spy' the smiling one! All credit goes to 'Jakhro' (King, Prophet). I can see none like 'Jakhro'. He even gives in anger!

"The moment I arrived at my destiny, my feet were cooled and my thirst was quenched. A desert walker found sweet water in scorching waste."

The Poet describes a man who is hard up for refuge and pretends love. A 'vagabond' has now returned. He went to get a 'fools' paradise' but all he got from his wife was a heavy beating for having deserted his duty.

'The vagabond' again now is here in the hope of breakfast and looks so shrivelled in body but is great in eating! He is always at the door. He loves to have perfumes so much, but rakes the horses' dung. Poor vagabond has now returned a 'complete wreck'!

### 11. Sarang.

The word 'Sarang' means 'rainy' season. It is also a name of a melody in music, which is usually sung in 'rainy season'.

The Poet sings with joy that "Again there are preparations for 'Rain, Lightnings, and Thunder'. Some clouds go to Istanbul, some to China; Rain, rain, rain every where! The clouds build towers in the skies. Peasants repair their ploughs. Grain is cheap. The Rust, that did mar my heart, has been cleaned by this 'God-reminder'.

"O rain! were you to take lessons from my poor eyes, your drizzle would never stop. Remembering 'the Beloved', my tears flow night and day."

### 12. Surirag.

'Surirag' is a name of a melody in music. It is also called 'Surag' which means 'best music'. It is usually sung from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The poet says: "O friend! I told you often to repair your boat. Oil it daily! Mind its leaks! Furnish it with riggings. And then take it out, so that it be safe. Acquire the merchandise, that 'time doth not corrupt'. Those,



who made a lasting bargain with the merchandise of Truth, were those, whom God let travel through mighty oceans safely. So hard it is to fare on the path to the Divine."

The poet regrets that 'Gold-dealers' are gone and 'Glass beads' are in fashion. "I dealt in tinsel glass and leaden stuff. Trash is cheaply bought! Now I find that my wares will be examined by gold dealers! Woe is me."

### 13. Samudi.

It is not a name of any melody in music but seems to have been named so in accordance with the theme. The word, 'Samudi', means 'seafarers'.

The Poet says, "Do remain at the moorings, my Lady, and so prevent the seafarers from plunging you into Sudden pain, by setting sail all at once. Lady, reside at moorings, settle down there: Don't take a rash step, as they will not wait, but sail. You knew their home was the ocean. Why did you not go with them? Alas! anchor chains are lifted already; they are ready to go! nay, they are gone."

Then the lady says: "When my loved one did start voyaging, I could not hold him. I was in my youth! Sailors seem to have gone. But I shall not cease to pray, till they return."

Far from here lie the ports. She cannot reach by foot. No one lifts a hand. At last God sends help! She goes with the wives of the merchants to the landing place. They arrive! The ploughers of the salty sea have already entered the sweet waters. They swept the port of 'Lanka' (Ceylon) for pearls. The women of merchants that wait here bring their offering to the sea. Bright lights they kindle everywhere, and even throw musk in the waters. Now the mast flag is in sight. Thrilled with great joy are those, who expect their loved ones! "O sisters", says the waiting Lady, "if to my home my Love would come, handfuls of pearls around his head I would turn and give to the poor (a custom followed in the East) to express gratitude and joy."

### 14. Kamud.

It is a name of a musical melody which means 'Love Dependent'.

"You noble are, I humble am," says the beautiful fisher maiden, to the king who has fallen in love with her. The poet says: "Those, who feed on smelling fish—and fish is their only property, with them the noble king hath made relationship! But as she came to court, every one felt like bowing to her deeply, as she had those noble qualities, which only a 'born-princess' formerly the meeting place of town's elite, but when diamonds I touched,

rarely possesses. No wonder then if the king carried her fish baskets, went fishing with her and often mixed with her people, though they were called the low fisherfolk!"

### 15-19. Sasui.

Punhu, the ruling prince of Kech has fallen passionately in love with 'Sasui', the beautiful daughter of a washerman. She returns love in the same measure. He marries her and settles down with the washer people. Their home becomes his home. He is being searched everywhere but not found. At last his brothers, who too are Sasui's brothers-in-law, leave Kech in search of him and find him at last, and ask him to come with them back to Kech. He refuses to part from the washerpeople. Sasui has fallen to sleep and cannot stop her brothers-in-law from taking him away. When on waking she finds that Punhu has gone, she is in despair and determined to find him, and leaves Bhambhore, her home. Terrible mountains stand now between Punhu and her home, Bhambhore. On her way through mountains she accuses the 'hard-hearted mount': "You have torn to shred the very soles of my feet—a thousand thorns prick my feet, and yet with torn feet, and on knees I will go to my love."

As she comes near Kech, the sun is declining, she makes a desperate race with the sunset! Her dress hangs in rags. "O Sun, do not set so soon," she cries. She wildly runs, as, when sun sets, she will no longer find the tracks of the camelcade!

"To what you adhere in life," the poet says: "the links after death shall remain. Those, who cannot see the Beloved here, how will they see Him there?" Just near Kech her delicate health gives way and she dies miserably in the mountain.

### 20. Leela.

The first Lady in Prince Chanesar's domain was queenly Leela. But she loved diamonds above every-thing! Tempted by diamonds she lost her spouse. The daughter of a minister had fallen in love with Chanesar. She disguised herself as a maid and with the knowledge of her mother came to terms with Leela. Leela accepted diamonds in exchange to give her husband for a night. In the morning Chanesar discovered that it had not been his wife who had shared his bed. When people heard of this bargain, they called her a fool! The prince turned her out. Leela says: "My house was formerly the meeting place of town's elite, but when diamonds I touched,



my spouse did loath my very sight." So the 'first lady of land', lost her place, degraded herself! Chanesar loves only those who are humble and hates those who boast of diamonds! Leela is advised to beseech his forgiveness and go on till Chanesar is moved. "Call for His compassion, because His mercy is immense."

### 21. Mumal and Rano.

A Prince of highest aesthetic qualities falls in love with 'Mumal', daughter of a minister who resides at 'Ludhana', on the river 'Kak'. She is supposed to be the most beautiful maiden the world has known. Everybody is in love with her, but she spurns every-one. She does not return the love of the aesthetic ruler and he goes and renounces the world, and becomes a "Yogi", not a common Yogi, but one of those, who go in search of Reality, become God lovers and later on 'Lahutis'—those who are supposed to have seen glimpses of God. Nothing can enthral true Lahutis any more. Rano meets this Yogi and is told to go to the waters of 'Kak', where 'love is generated'.

Princely Rano goes, has a look at Mumal's magnetic eyes and falls desperately in love with her. Strange to say, for the first time Mumal drops her conceit, pride and caprices and falls in love with Rano, so that, it looks, she would die without him. So she becomes Rano's wife! After some time he has to attend to his duties, and leaves. On coming back, he sees Mumal sleeping with another person at her side. Without enquiring he returns back. Now the days of sorrow begin for Mumal. She weeps day and night and waits for his return.

Till one day, suddenly there is a cry. A messenger from Rano! "Rano arrives at dawn!" What Ecstasy!

The order of the day is: No class, no caste, whoever comes to Rano, is welcomed. There is nothing but Rano.

### 22. Barvo Sindhi.

'Barvo' is a name of musical melody. Latif has made some modification in it and called it 'Barvo Sindhi'.

The poet says that a lady complains, that her breath is no longer her own, and if only the Beloved once came to her! She cries: "O Beloved! all is sweet that comes from thee! Still was it right to make me mad with love and then let me die in despair!"

The poet further remarks that "that is the way of the loved one that some times the 'doors' of the Beloved are closed, sometimes wide open, sometimes He confides secrets, sometimes does not speak a word. All the same, when the Beloved walks with infinite grace on ground, the Earth kisses the prints of his feet." Poet however complains that people profess friendship by words, yet they do not know sincerity. One meets only rarely One single-minded human being, all others do not know their minds. Knowing Heart loves only 'One', more it will not admit.

"Divine grace is that it will never forsake the weak ones even when they falter."

### 23. Dahar.

The word 'Dahar' means 'a desert Valley'. It is the name of a musical theme also. The poet sees a lonely tree in the desert, and enquires from it about the days when desert was a bed of a lake. It sympathises with its present condition and yet is surprised to see that it is blossoming. How can that be? "How can you make these crimson blossoms and fruit that fall all over you? How could you give occasionally such grand feast?" Then he sees the fish-catchers in retrospect, who got rich over too much fish and lorded it over the poor. All these are gone, as if they never existed. Then he moralises: "Oh simpletons: Do not lose heads over the few days on earth. All will pass." Likewise he sees cranes that used to adorn the place; they too are gone. He sees dew fallen and says, "Night weeps over sorrows of man! What glitter bright at dawn are not dewdrops; night burst into thousand tears. Fools laugh and laugh, forgetting quite the task they came for. They have tasted only the froth and never drank the milk of Life; they mistook and went empty-handed back, building forts of sand! How long will humanity build them still!"

### 24. Ghatu.

The word, 'Ghatu', means 'Shark-hunter'. The poet says that there was a power weird in Kolach. He who entered it was lost. "No one knows, who does ensnare the nets and keeps them down. No one brings back news! With spears brave men went forth, but none of them returned! The result is that the bazar is without fish-shells even; formerly there were small carps, herrings and shrimps, but now there is nothing. If you throw nets in creeks, sharks are never caught. Have strong sweep-nets. Sharks don't go to shallow waters! \*'Relationships' do not befit Kolachi fishermen! They must have longing for the 'deep' and yearn to



kill the shark." "Relationships do not befie" means thought of relationship must not keep you back from going to kill sharks. "Some one got into whirlpools and 'fathomlessness', killed there the shark, and now happiness beams from fishermen's eyes."

#### 25. Kapaiti.

The word 'Kapaiti' means 'spinner'. The poet advises a lady thus: "Spin on as long as you can! This phase (Life) will end soon, so spin on as long as you can spin. Toil on, feel humble and not proud." When connoisseurs arrived, they told her of her many mistakes. She had failed to tear out lumps from the yarn. But all the same, because of her humility, they accepted the yarn.

Alas! the time has come when not one is spinning. Spinning-wheels lie in disorder! Empty is the yard. Poet says "I carry wool in my tunic and I proceed to spinning-yard, but, alas! no single spinner is breathing there; they have gone to sleep for aye!" meaning that God seekers are dead.

#### 26. Rippa.

The word 'Rippa' means 'a great calamity'. The poet says that a lady complains to her mother: "Sorrow's harrowing has swamped my whole being! My love took joy and health from me! My fate is destructive! Sorrow runs wildly through me in dense rows. My bed is all wet with tears whole night! O, Mother help me!"

She gives advice: "Weep secretly, and never disclose through tears your wretched state! Bear pain until those arrive, who can remove pain. Hide your love, as the potter, who covers up the kiln. Free fires can never bake a pot. Do what potters do. Never uncover fire!"

#### 27. Karayal.

The word 'Karayal' means 'a beautiful bird'. In this 'Sur' the poet talks to a 'Swan'. He first says that the roots of lotus flower grow in deep waters. The humble bee soars about it, but the Fate knows their inner wishes.

The swan represents a most noble human being, who goes out to do a lot of good in the world. It does not associate with cormorants, low coarse folk. The swan flies up from the height to survey the world, to find true values—the shining bits, which could improve the world. Suddenly he is caught in the whirl of the world; all kinds of things keep him

busy. The valuable things, which he had picked to utilize in the world, are forgotten. He is entangled in the thorny growth at the banks, where the cormorants—the fish-eaters are. The advice is "keep no company with those low folks, who soil their beaks with mud to secure fishes—who, as if, sell their soul for pottage."

"Go to deep waters and hum your secrets of Reality! Here at banks, the bird-hunters are after you! Pick the pearls from the deep waters and do what you wanted to do!"

Then poet mourns those who had graceful necks, who sung sweet songs, flew away: "not one lovely peacock I see, and crafty snipes have made their homeland here instead."

#### 28. Marui.

'Marui' is a name of lady who is betrothed already. She connects her betrothal to pre-creation period. She says she heard a voice: "Am I not thy Lord?" She said "yes" with all her heart. Then with a 'bond', she did adhere, that moment, to her Love! This was before God created souls or said: "Be" and all was united; her kinship started. She says she still bears that relationship and that was her real betrothal to Maru.

The legend on which it is based is that 'Marui', who was betrothed to 'Maru' is imprisoned by a nobleman, who fell in love with her. The nobleman, 'Omar', brings all what human hearts can desire—fine clothes, fine foods, every thing, to win her love. She rejects all and cries: "Only let me be free from your mansions." She does not even wash herself. She does not wash her clotted and ugly hair. "O, were I to breathe my last", she says to Omar, "let me be carried to Malir—my desert village"

One day there comes a messenger and informs her that she need only stay for a few days more here. She feels like falling at his feet. Omar then gives her freedom! But then, what about her dirt since she has to go, where none without Beauty is received? "Perhaps my tribesmen will reproach me, if I look washed and fair."

#### 29. Sohni.

'Sohni' is a name of a lady who falls in love with 'Mehtar'. He goes to live on the other side of the river. The poet says that currents have velocity and rivers possess speed, but where love is, a different rush is there: and those who are steeped in Love's fathomlessness are never afraid of depth. Reality's



vision will be the reward of the true lovers! Many stand on shore and cry: "Sahar" (Lover of Sohni), but they don't risk to go into the water.

In wintry night and rain, Sohni seeks the flood with the jar of clay as her help to swim. (Big baked jars of clay, open at the top, are used, often by fishermen, to 'float'. They lie upon it and float from one side of the river to the other).

On the other side of the River, 'Mehtar' (other name of Sahar), 'the buffaloherd' waits for Sohni to come over. She hears buffalos' bells, and dances for joy. She takes the jar to swim over. Some jealous person has changed the jar, and left an unbaked one which breaks in midwater. She laments: "I did not know, the jar was faked one, the colours being the same." The Jar—'the means'—to reach, did break; alas! the maiden is drowned.

The means on which she had relied, thrust her in the flood in this foul black night. "But only after she had died, she heard the Herdsman's call." In the above words the poet reveals the greatest tragedy and yet he says: "Hundreds were drowned by the river, but river was drowned by this maid."



## ABOUT THIS BOOK

"Nowhere does the sacred fire of poetry and music burn with such a pure flame as it does in the Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif ..... There is hardly a facet of man's deeper understanding of his Destiny and his Role on Earth which he has not revealed in all its majestic splendour in his poetry. He opens our inner eye to catch the glimpse of the Reality and makes it see through the world of appearance that which is its essence, its substance, its abiding truth. But for a person who does not know Sindhi language and is not aware of the grandeur and loftiness of the style with which Latif depicts his mystical insights and intuitions, it requires a great deal of sympathy to get to the depth of the meaning and significance of his poetry.

"In rendering into English the verses in Sindhi of Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif, Mrs. Elsa Kazi has produced a work of the highest importance which is likely to be declared as one of the masterpieces of our time. The task of presenting in English language the poetic vision and truth enshrined in the verses of Shah Abdul Latif, who has been acknowledged to be the greatest poet of Sindhi language, is by no means an easy undertaking. But despite the usual difficulty of *translating* poetry in another language, Mrs. Elsa Kazi has succeeded remarkably well. A great deal of poetic insight and sympathy we associate with the approach of Shah Abdul Latif to the problem of man's place in the scheme of things, of his spiritual aspiration and its fulfilment, would be found represented in the English version in a style which is suited to the theme of Latif's song and, what is more, embodied in a structural form which is very much akin to the original."





# RISALO OF SHAH ABDULLATIF

(Selections)

Translated in verse by ELSA KAZI

